

THE
MODERN NOVELISTS
OF
FRANCE.

TRANSLATED
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AUTHOR OF "SKETCHES IN FRANCE," THE "STUDENT'S FRENCH GRAMMAR,"
ETC., ETC.

PAUL HUET, THE YOUNG MIDSHIPMAN. BY EUGENE SUE.
KERNOK THE CORSAIR. BY EUGENE SUE.
PHYSIOLOGY OF THE GENERAL LOVER. BY SOULIÉ.
THE POACHER. BY JULES JANIN.
JENNY. BY PAUL DE KOCK.
HUSBANDS. BY PAUL DE KOCK.

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P R E F A C E .

THE merited popularity which various French novelists of the present day have attained, suggested the idea of bringing out, at a cheap rate, concise and spirited translations of a few of the best works of the most noted French authors. Eugene Sue, whose fame took its rise in England at the period when his "Mysteries" appeared, which not only resounded in our capital, but found an echo in the remotest corners of the United Kingdom, had, previous to that time, given birth to tales wherein his maritime knowledge and depth of genius were brought into full play, and which works, in the estimation of many, surpass even the famed "Mysteries," or the never-ending "Jew." And then again, there are other talented foreign authors, whose claim to English notoriety is perhaps as great as that of Sue, and whose works, possessing mind, and powerful delineations of the passions, and sentiments the most ennobling, are totally unknown to the English-reading public.

Should this volume be successful—another, bringing into English light a few of those foreign beacons that have shed, and are shedding, a halo round their names, will shortly appear.

In this volume are introduced two of the naval productions of Eugene Sue, the first of which, "Paul Huet; or, the Sala-

mander," created, on its appearance in Paris, considerable sensation; for the dark character of Szaffie, and the pure, noble, and pristine mind of Paul, are so beautifully delineated—the one forming such a vivid contrast with the other, now causing a feeling of horror to pass over the mind, now kindling our noblest affections, and filling us with admiration—that he who reads cannot but admire; while the expatriated Marquis, the ex-tobacconist of the Rue Grammont, with his shrew, Elizabeth, at once excites laughter, and forces conviction on the mind of the impolicy—the injustice, indeed—of rulers, swayed by influence, placing the incapacitated in situations of responsibility.

The second, "Kernok, the Corsair," a short naval tale, of striking interest, tends to excite awe in the mind, by the stirring events portrayed; while it has in view objects which Sue never loses sight of in his works—the delineation of character, and the influence of circumstances on the human mind—things which, in too many cases, are not duly considered. The bold Kernok, daring and bloodthirsty as the pirate—in retirement, good-hearted and meek; and Melie, the affectionate and devoted Melie; are graphically described, and admirably portray nature in its various workings in the human heart.

The "Physiology of the General Lover," a pleasing tale, by Soulie, will show the power which that writer throws into a work of a more extended nature; as will, also, "The Poacher," by Janin: while "Jenny, the Fair Debutante," and "Husbands," by Paul de Kock, evince the simplicity of style, the truthfulness to nature, of that famed novelist; for, like Poussin, who gave the leaves of his trees an appearance which convey the virtual sense of their being ruffled by the breeze, that writer portrays the human feelings so vividly, that the springs of the soul respond to his delineations, whether it be the Grisette at a fête, or a

Georgette reflecting on what she was, and what she might have been. Pity, say some—that, unlike Dickens, morality is not the aim of Paul de Kock. The French think differently from the English. Their idea is—that, to avert the failings common to man, human frailties should be depicted in their most glaring light. This certainly may make the young heart more wary; but, at the same time, it will tend to destroy that natural confidence, which is beautiful in the spring-time of life, and which often acts as a shield of protection.

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PAUL HUET,

THE YOUNG MIDSHIPMAN.

CHAPTER I.

THE TOBACCONIST'S.

In the year 1815 there was a well-known and much frequented tobacconist's, in the Rue Grammont, at Paris. Nothing was wanting to render it attractive in point of external and internal appearance. A large sheet of plated iron served as a shade to a lamp that was always lighted; an enormous carved snuff-box stood enticingly on the counter, near which was a fresco, representing the inveterate snuffer, who, his forefinger and thumb thrust half way up his dilated nostrils, was inhaling, with delight, the odoriferous mixture.

A host of Englishmen, Germans, Russians, Prussians, and Bavarians, desirous of charming away the leisure hours of the guard-house, resorted to the shop of M. Forman, where they indulged in the innocent distractions of snuffing, chewing, and smoking.

It was a lovely evening in July; the air was fresh, the sky clear, and the brilliant equipages, passing here and there along the Boulevards, spread whirlwinds of dust in all directions, while gaily-dressed ladies and gentlemen, walking at pleasure, were seen—some engaged in conversation, others smiling and laughing—full of happiness and full of delight.

During that evening the shop of M. Forman was never empty for a single minute; each customer, on entering, looked in vain, behind the counter, for the open and cheerful countenance of the tobacconist. Questions were put to the shop-boy, but the answers given, instead of satisfying the interrogator, tended only to excite his curiosity: "If, in future, you do not take snuff till my master comes back, I'll warrant that you won't sneeze much for some time."

A tall fellow, in military uniform, entered, and shouted out for cigars to the full extent of his voice, to whom Francis said, in a sarcastic tone, "If my master were here, you would approach him with your hat in hand, instead of knocking upon the counter with your huge sabre, as a blacksmith does upon his anvil." Indeed, every one was astonished at the disappearance of the worthy tobacconist, whose patience and good humour were well-known and justly appreciated. His absence, however, would have excited less surprise had the scene which was taking place in a little room above the shop, been known. At one time, M. Forman was walking up and down his narrow apartment; at another, casting a timid and furtive glance towards the window; at this moment seated, at that one standing in inquietude, his eyes fixed upon the pendulum of the clock.

M. Forman was about fifty years of age; was tall, thin, with grey hair crowning a low forehead, eyes of a light hazel, small chin, short nose, and extended mouth—all of which gave a singular expression of simplicity to his countenance.

"Elizabeth," said he, stopping before a woman of about forty years of age, who was busily writing at a small table; "Elizabeth, what do you think of this delay? It is near eight o'clock, and we have heard nothing more. They must have deceived my cousin; however, I am pleased at it."

Elizabeth looked angrily, and, throwing her pen from her, said, "Deceived! deceived! You would like it to be so, without doubt."

"Come, come; do not vex yourself. You know that it hurts you as well as me."

"Vex myself!" she cried, her small eyes sparkling from under a cap lavishly trimmed with lace. "Vex myself! Have I not occasion for being vexed? Is it not against your will that I have endeavoured to place you in a respectable position—that I have endeavoured to drag you from your ignoble counter, where you spend your life, even without blushing, in selling Virginia and Macaba?"

"My dear wife, the Macaba is superior to the Virginia. Sell Macaba without blushing. Well!"

"What low mindedness! Are you not ashamed of your mean position and degraded taste?"

"No! I am very well. I know everything that's passing in this neighbourhood, where I am respected and liked; for, to tell you the truth, I harm no one, and I do good whenever I can. My simple habits render me happy. In the morning I have my coffee; in the evening, my game at dominos, and my bottle of beer. There are no troubles to annoy me, for my shop brings me sufficient for the present, and prevents me from being anxious about the future. My faith! if this be not happiness, where, in the devil's name, would you have me to look for

it? Besides," he added, with a happy smile on his countenance, "I have forgotten to mention my good, my perfect, my excellent partner in life."

The impatience of his *perfect* partner had no bounds. Starting up from her chair, she seized her husband by the arm, drew him to the end of the room, and, withdrawing a screen of gauze, disclosed the portrait of a naval officer, whose costume seemed to belong to that of the last century. Above the portrait, and inlaid in the frame, was a rich escutcheon, supported by two lions, and surmounted by a marquis's crown. "Look there," she cried, pushing the unlucky Forman so rudely, that he fell upon his knees on the sofa, "look upon that portrait, and die with shame when thinking of what you were, and what you ought to be."

The tobacconist, casting a sad look at the portrait, sighed, shook his head mournfully, wiped a tear from his eye, and said, reproachfully, "O God! still this portrait. Elizabeth! Elizabeth! what cruel recollections you awaken in my bosom. All this has gone by, and can never return. Even the hope of my ever seeing our estate at Longetour, where I passed the happy days of my youth, has vanished. Revered old castle, where I pressed the hand of my dying father; where I kissed the grey head of my good mother, who, with her last breath, said to me, 'Albert, you will be happy, for you have been a good and dutiful son.' Poor mother! who was so charitable, so much cherished by the unfortunate! they have thrown thy ashes to the wind; they have destroyed thy chapel, and razed to the ground our ancient castle, that was so full of domestic reminiscences. Oh, dear me!"

Here the good man paused, remained an instant absorbed in thought, and after passing his hand rapidly across his forehead, said, "Tush! all this is past, forgotten; therefore, Elizabeth, I beseech you to speak no more of it. You know that my tastes, as well as my habits, are changed. Obscurity is conformable to my age and disposition. I never was ambitious, so let me live and die here tranquilly—and in peace. Abandon those foolish thoughts of yours; for you know as well any one the embarrassing position in which you would place me, were that which you have demanded in my name, and against my will, granted to me."

"What a strange being you are," said his wife, with constrained anger. "Do you think that it is for you alone that I have brought into play the powerful protection which the Restoration affords us. No, truly; you are not worth the trouble. It is in honour of our name."

"Our name! our name!" murmured the tobacconist, with impatience. "Our name! you may well say *our name*. If I can willingly give up my claim to titles and honours, you may well do the same; you who are so proud, and still—"

"Well, Sir, finish—finish, if you please." interrupted Elizabeth, in rage.

"I did not mean to make you angry, for you are the wife of my heart—of my own choice; still your father was a fringe-maker and draper, in the Rue aux Ours."

Although the latter part of the sentence was pronounced in an almost inaudible tone, I do not know, judging from the flash of fire that darted from Elizabeth's eye, what would have been the result, had Francis not come in at this moment.

"O, Madame," said he, on entering, "here is a packet that a gendarme has just brought."

"Give it to me; and begone," she said, in an imperious tone. She then broke the seal, while her husband looked at her with as much terror as a man feels who is about to be arrested.

"Bravo!" she cried, after she had read it. "I have not been deceived." Then advancing towards her husband, she added, "M Forman, Marquis of Longetour, we will at last resume our title."

"Our title!" muttered the Marquis.

"Thanks to the influence of our family."

"Our family!" sobbed the tobaccoist.

"Thanks to our family, you have been appointed captain of a frigate; the time that you have spent as an emigrant in that ignoble shop, counts as if you had been in active service. More than that; you are now commander of a corvette, and are ordered to go on an important mission."

The Marquis remained a few minutes thunderstruck, then, he cried, in anger, "What! Elizabeth, a corvette! commander of a man-of-war! I, who have not seen the sea for twenty years; who, at best, have only made one voyage in my life, which was from Rochetort to Bayonne. What absurdity! May the devil confound that head of yours, for you are the most foolish woman I ever knew. I refuse this commandership," he added, throwing the dispatches upon the table.

"You refuse!" cried the Marchioness, seizing her husband by the arm, which she pinched cruelly, "you refuse! No, no, I don't think so."

Poor Forman, overcome by the fear which his wife inspired in him, submitted, as was his wont, and muttered, "Come, then, Elizabeth, I will accept it."

"So much the better. Sign this letter, which I have written purposely, expressing your thanks to the ministry."

"You really wish it, then, Elizabeth; think well before——"

"Sign it."

The Marquis wrote his name, threw the pen from him, in grief, saying, "I am lost."

"At length," said the Marchioness, "we will take a station in society which we ought never to have quitted. Follow me, Marquis."

"Adieu! adieu! to all the happy moments of my life," said the ex-tobacconist, sorrowfully, as he slowly followed the steps of his sweet and constant partner.

A month afterwards, the Marquis of Longetour set out for Toulon, in order to take the command to which he was appointed. This was the reason why M. Forman no longer sold snuff, cigars, or any other kind of tobacco.

CHAPTER II.

THE SEA-PORT.

Arise, thou brilliant sun of Provence, arise! Already Elba discloses itself in that resplendent flood of light with which thou inundatest the horizon! Arise, arise, and cover with a veil of purple the high mountains of Corsica, and gild, with tints of gold, the slumbering waters that bathe the Gulf of Frejus. But thy rays have already dispelled the quivering and fresh vapours which glide over the sea, and ascend at thy appearance—ascend to thee, soft sun, that brings us from the fair coasts of Italy warmth and pleasure; for Provence equals the soil and climate of the Italian. Look yonder at the masses of verdure, covered with flowers of snowy whiteness, tipped with hues of gold, which spread around them sweet and pleasing perfumes. These white houses, with roofs of red tile, the soil brown and burnt up, do they not remind us of a town in Tuscany? Yet it is Hyeres, fertile Hyeres! that loves to see its fruitful orange-trees, its enchanting bastides, reflected in the blue waters of the Mediterranean.

The fair daughters of Provence, who bind their hair with silken webs of green tendrils—who hide their brown and golden bosoms in bodices decorated with red festoons, are equal, if they do not surpass, the handsome Italian maids of Arno.

The daughters of Provence have, also, in the evenings, their dances by the sea-shore, lively dances, animated and tasteful. In the evening, too, when the moon gilds with silver the trees of myrtle, the breeze, embalmed with perfume, is for a moment hushed—when the soft sound of ardent and burning kisses, of tender rustlings, break the silence, and excite to dreams of bliss, to quivering of heart and gentle joy.

But already the sun strikes vertically upon the brown roofed houses of St. Tropez, and shadows the huge rocks of marble and of granite that encase the Gulf of Grimaud to the point where the neat little port is situated. All the brilliant shades of these rocks of a thousand colours, brighten up in turn, and

sparkle in tints of blue and green, in the hues of the chestnut and of the pearl.

Venerable and ancient port of St. Tropez, birth-place of a brave admiral—of the noble Suffren! nothing now remains of thy ancient splendour but thy two turrets, blackened by the rays of a scorching sun, garbed in ivy and in garlands of blue convolvuluses.

How many times have the accursed Saracens, braving the Counts of Provence, anchored their galleys by the base of thy port, and have loaded their vessels with the fair daughters of Provence, who were eagerly sought after at the bazaars of Smyrna and Tunis.

Poor young girls of St. Tropez, for thee no longer is the hope of being torn away in tears from thy family, carried off by some accursed pirate, and placed, palpitating but curious, within the rich porticos of the palace of an emir; for thee no longer is the hope of quitting thy huts of brick and mats of straw; of leaving your waters, tintured with the salt of the sea, for perfumed baths 'neath the sycamore, for the carpets of Cashmere, and elegant domes enlivened by Moorish paintings.

Fair daughters, I can easily conceive thy soft regrets. In former times, the season for carrying thee off, was looked forward to with hope; the pirate's appearance was to thee love and indulgence.

And thou, also, who would not pity thee, poor port of St. Tropez, for sprightly boats with flowing banderoles no longer ride cheerily on thy waters; no! heavy merchant vessels, a mean looking wherry, or, by chance, a goëlette, may visit thee—then all is in commotion.

And, by the crown of the Holy Virgin. was it not so? Was not the town in commotion on the 17th of January, 1815, for the vessel that was riding in thy roads was not a tartane, with its smack sails; a both, with its light and floating flags like a woman's neckerchief; a dogre, with its immense topmast; a mullette, with its seven triangular sails; a gondola, of Venitian whiteness, with purple curtains; a heu, which stretches out its vast yards like the wings of a leviathan; nor was it a prahau-playry from Macassar; a balour, from the island of Sonde; a pia-hap from Magellan; a yacht from England; a catimarou, a hourque, a yawl, no; it was—it was the SALAMANDER?

CHAPTER III.

THE SALAMANDER.

The Salamander — pretty, elegant, expressive, coquettish name, e'en as the gracious corvette itself; so lively, so quick, so symmetrical, so full in sail, and so bounding on the waters. With sails unfurled even to the mizen-mast, supple and alert, it glided o'er the waves with the rapidity of a sea-mew. But it was not alone a vessel of speed and of elegance. Oh no! Scarcely did the wind waft the rigging of an enemy in sight, than she spoke loud and long, strong and far. If you had seen that proud corvette, in the year 1813, bounding with delirium in the midst of the fire which spouted out of her thirty guns; if you had seen the showers of fire, of bullets, and of grape that she vomited from her batteries — you would have taken it for the burning lava of a volcano, or a lake of fire, of which she was the real Salamander.

Oh! if you had seen her furiously engaged with an English frigate, seizing it with her grappling irons, and firing for the last time when so close to her enemy, that the gunners of the two vessels broke each others' heads with the rammers. Three times the grappling irons broke; three times she boarded her enemy, who was blood-thirsty and intrepid even as herself. Then the corvette took fire, and the flames curled and turned, climbed up the rigging, and hissed among the sails. The fire, the insatiable fire, was not, at first, perceived—the destruction of the English was all that was thought of; besides, there was no fear of an explosion, for there was not a grain of powder in the magazine.

Intrepid Salamander! the fire blazed away, still she remained dauntless, sparing—as a prodigal might do his only remaining crown—her last tremendous volley to blow the English to the devil.

At last, the enemy appeared upon the poop. The Salamander blazed, the cannons roared, and showers of balls fell amongst the English. Hurrah! hurrah! done for! done for! not a surviving Englishman. The Salamander has done her duty. Then the brave crew thought, for the first time, of extinguishing the flames.

But how changed was my brave and worthy Salamander. She no longer unfurled her sails in pride; no longer did her shining batteries sparkle in the rays of the sun. Blackened with the flames, riddled with balls, and gory with the blood of her enemy, she reached the port, with her tricoloured flag nailed to the poop.

Nevertheless, this singular appearance became the old coquette. At a ball we often meet a charming young girl—with sparkling eyes, with rosy lips, and skin softer than velvet—robed in thin gauze, fitting tight at the waist; her perfumed hair carefully braided, her sash neatly tied, her *collerette* so regular that the plaits might be counted. In her all is delight—the delight and joy of a girl who laughs and laughs again, when carried away by the bounding and exciting waltz.

That gaiety, that care at the toilet, pleases, I grant. Nevertheless I have often discovered more elegance, more charms, in the loose waists, in the dishevelled hair; yes, more charms in a face that was slightly pale, that wore an expression of sadness; yes, more charms in all this enchanting disorder, which proves that the Salamander was, in the eyes of the nineteen survivors, a thousand times more picturesque, more poetic, and more bewitching after the combat, for, although wounded, they worked the Salamander, and brought her to Toulon to be refitted.

It was truly the warmth of honest feeling that caused them to repair a vessel which was riddled from stem to stern. Much was done, and much was changed; still it was the Salamander.

But those shattered boards—those cannons smashed by the balls of the English—that deck stained with blood—all speak powerfully in the pages of our naval exploits. Yes, indeed, those who underwent this fiery baptism—the remainder of that glorious crew, could, I assure you, well initiate novices into the secrets of naval warfare. So, at the Restoration, the Salamander—refitted, haughty, and mettlesomè, was ready to show her teeth.

Ah, the insolent thing! she knew well that she had on board of her a hundred and twenty sailors, all of whom were of the ex-garde, except nineteen of the old crew, who were distinguished by the appropriate appellation of *frebrands*. They were all, indeed, noble fellows, with tanned countenances, hands of iron, herculean shoulders, and with hearts guileless as those of children. Oh! they were intrepid dare-devils—rash, yet possessing the most tender feelings.

But those demons of sailors, although they knew that Bonaparte detested the navy—Bonaparte, whom they had seen and accompanied in the disastrous campaign in Russia—they loved him, and shared their bread and clothing with the soldiers, for they found in him and in them that which they possessed themselves—kindness and bravery.

So that, in 1815, when they heard of the affairs of Rochefort, of the noble and praiseworthy proposition of Commander Collet, of the embarkation of Napoleon on board the *Bellerophon*, they wept in rage, and became sad and savage. But learning of the bloody re-action in the south, they bit their lips, knit their brows, and muttered to themselves. The inhabitants of Toulon

were disturbed, riots ensued, and to avoid fresh quarrels, the corvette was sent away from the port to St. Tropez, where it was then stationed.

Poor dear corvette! She left the roads not as in former times. O, no. She left sad and seemingly ashamed! almost without guns. They had pruned and lopped her so that almost all that remained of that glorious vessel, was her name, which still *makes the English tremble!* She retained her crew of fire-brands and sailors of the ex-garde, who were sad and sorrowful as herself.

So a dull and cheerless vessel, the only one at the port of St. Tropez, was she—the Salamander, that the sun gilded with his morning rays.

CHAPTER IV.

PIERRE HUET.

No sooner had the sun appeared above the horizon, than the sails were unfurled and the flag hoisted. A long, loud, shrill whistle rent the air; the sailors came on deck one by one, with naked feet, some carrying mops, others with freestone and sand; and began to scrub, polish, and wash the deck of the corvette till it was as white and smooth as marble.

An officer, envelopped in a large blue surtout, with a cap trimmed with gold, went up to the quarter-deck, sat down, took off his cap, and exposed an expressive countenance, burnt brown by the rays of the sun. He appeared to be about forty years of age; his features, not remarkable for beauty, were expressive of open-heartedness and courage; signs of uneasiness, which were badly concealed, proved that he was not in his ordinary state of mind. At one time he paced rapidly to and fro, at another he seated himself; then these words, spoken in a deep, low voice, escaped his lips—"What a devil of a lad! cursed boy!"

Another personage appeared upon the deck. He was a little, stout man, with light hair, who had a pair of green spectacles upon his long nose, and wore a cap and grey frock coat.

"Good morning, my dear lieutenant," said the little stout man, on coming up.

"Good morning, purser," replied the first lieutenant, in seeming displeasure at the interruption.

"Splendid weather, my dear lieutenant. There's a sun for you!"

"Very fine!" said the lieutenant, drily.

After a pause of several minutes' duration, the silence was

broken by the latter: "Well, purser," said he, "I am the only one that remains of the old officers of the Salamander; and the sailors, who have been with her fifteen years, are every day asking me for the pay which is due to them; can you not write to Toulon on this subject?"

"My dear lieutenant, your wishes have been anticipated. Yesterday I received the money, and I was thinking of paying the men to-day."

"Come, you are a worthy purser; my brave seamen will receive that news with joy. Poor fellows! let them be paid; their money is well-earned. And since they chase—"

"Excuse me, lieutenant. We are not chased away; but the crew have the appearance of—"

"The appearance of what?" interrupted the lieutenant.

"No, no; I did not mean that; but one would think—"

"What would one think?"

"No, you do not understand me. The men appear to regret that which no longer exists. They are wrong, however."

"Come, purser," said the lieutenant, austere, "put a stop to your discourse. Tell me, did you see my son leave the vessel?"

"Who? Master Paul?"

"Yes, yes; my son."

"No, my dear lieutenant; I thought he was on board. Is he not here?"

"No; and his absence grieves me, for he is on shore without permission, and I must punish him as it becomes a father and an officer."

"But are you sure of it?"

"Quite certain," said the lieutenant, with impatience. "Fool," he added, to himself, "to think that the inquietude of a father would allow the existence of a doubt."

"But," said the purser, "here comes M. Merval. Perhaps he will be able to tell you."

"Enough, sir. It is not meet that every one should know my secrets."

The new comer was the second lieutenant, fair, handsome, and elegant. Although it was early in the morning, his uniform was buttoned and arranged with scrupulous care; his new epaulettes sparkled in the rays of the sun, and a handsome poniard, with a mother of pearl handle, was fastened by a black silk cord to an elegant gold chain which hung round his neck.

When he took off his hat to salute the first lieutenant, he exposed a head of fair hair, so carefully combed and curled that it would have graced the most lovely female.

"How do you do?" said he, in English, addressing the first lieutenant.

"Very well, my dear Merval. But how is it that you address me in English. That language, young man, does not suit me."

"Come, my dear lieutenant, this spleen has been created by the war. Tush! you are wrong. I have seen enough of the English, and, God knows, they are brave, good-hearted fellows."

"And famous seamen! famous seamen!" said the purser. Seamen able to buy and sell us. Ah! ah!"

The lieutenant cast a disdainful look at the speaker, blushed, and remained silent.

"Yes, my dear purser," said the second lieutenant. "On that score you are as good as they; that is, we are as good."

The lieutenant rose abruptly, a cloud passed over his open countenance, and pacing the deck, he said, "I must send ashore. Oh! my son, my son!" Then addressing the master's mate, he added, "Tell La Joie that I want him."

Five minutes afterwards a figure appeared at the fore-hatch-way, which gradually rose till it assumed a gigantic height; then that tall figure advanced towards the first lieutenant, took off its cap, seized a whistle, raised it, and waited for orders.

It was La Joie, the boatswain, one of the old crew of the Salamander; a firebrand—yes, a true firebrand.

It is impossible to describe anything more sad, more morose, more grim, more ugly, than the yellow, boney face of La Joie.

"Advance," said the first lieutenant.

La Joie advanced a few paces, and then stood still.

"Nearer." Then the lieutenant whispered something in the ear of the boatswain.

La Joie made an expressive sign with his hand, put on his cap, and without saying a word, raised the whistle to his mouth, and produced a loud, shrill, modulated noise, which, with seafarers, signifies, "man the gig."

Two minutes afterwards, neither more nor less, twelve men were standing with uplifted oars in the captain's gig. La Joie leapt into it, seated himself, and after respectfully removing the colours that lay on the stern sheets, he applied the whistle to his mouth, and the oars simultaneously clove the clear liquid. A noise was heard, but not that of the splashing of water. The boatswain again whistled, and the oars cut through the waves with one movement, one cadence, and with such harmony, that one would have believed that some ponderous machine directed the regular motion of the twelve oars.

The head of the gig reached the shore, La Joie started up, leapt out, and disappeared behind the pier.

CHAPTER V.

THE SHIP'S OFFICERS.

The steward having announced that breakfast was on the table, the lieutenant, purser, and Merval, descended into the cabin, where they found the surgeon of the vessel, a vigorous, active man, about fifty years of age, with grey hair, and keen bright eyes.

"What the devil's the matter with you, Pierre?" said the surgeon, addressing the lieutenant. "It is an hour since the breakfast was served up; it is now cold, and that new cook of ours is grumbling furiously at what he terms 'the spoliation of his victuals.'"

"Do not be uneasy, doctor," said the first lieutenant, taking his seat at the head of the table; "we will make up for lost time."

For several minutes nothing was heard but the rattling of plates, and the clattering of knives and forks.

"I say, Pierre," the doctor at length said, "do you know when our new commander is coming on board. Ah! he must be a stiff sort of a chap to conduct this corvette; the crew is a good one, but riotous as incarnate devils; good and brave, and can go through fire and water, but the fellows must be commanded as you command them, Pierre, with a rod of iron. One thing—may I be d——d if I can account for it—there is not one who would not lay down his life for you. I hope a stern, inflexible, noble commander has been sent, who has distinguished himself in the service, and who is in other respects kind and humane. Tell us, Pierre—do you know who this commander is? do you know his name, and to what ship he previously belonged?"

"I was told his name," replied Pierre, with indifference. "It is the Baron, or the Marquis, or the Count, of Longetour. I think it is Marquis; but these cursed titles confound me, for there is as much absurdity in them as if we were saying the chevalier top-mast, and the countess mainsail. But pardon me, Merval," added the lieutenant, extending his hand to the young officer. "I forgot that you were a—a Count, I think it is."

The painful expression which darkened the countenance of the young lieutenant passed away, and he said, pressing the hand of Pierre, "I am second lieutenant on board the Salamander, and am proud of being under the command of a brave man, such as you are, lieutenant."

"Monsieur, is, indeed, a Count," said the purser. "He is down upon my scroll, Egbert Dieudonne Vincent Beaunair, Count. My faith! Count Merval. It sounds prettily."

"That will do, purser," said the young lieutenant, blushing, "I know my name."

"Yes, sir, oh yes, sir; but you are a Count. Fine name that! very fine name. Wouldn't I like to be a Count. What say you, doctor?"

"Hold your tongue," said the doctor; "you are a goose at best; for none of that tribe gabbles more than you do."

"What is that!" said the little fat fellow, whose cheeks assumed a crimson hue.

"I tell you that you are as stupid as a goose," said the imperturbable doctor, staring him in the face.

"Come, come, do not be angry," said the first lieutenant, smiling, "you know, purser, that the doctor is always free with his tongue; I have known him for twenty-three years, and I am sure you will not change him."

"You are right," said the doctor; "even from the time that you first knew me; when I said in my youth to Admiral — 'That he had conducted himself as a poltroon before the enemy; that a crew of brave men had been blown to pieces through his cowardice.' And well I knew it, for, wounded myself, I dressed some, amputated others, and took care of all, as if they had been my own brothers; therefore, you see, purser, that having told an admiral that he was a coward, I am able to tell you that you are a goose."

"Enough, doctor, enough," said Pierre; pitying the purser, who seemed as if he were sitting on hot irons."

"But," said the doctor, "I tell you what, purser. After we have had a cruise together, you will find that old Garnier is a good seaman, but he must disgorge everything that rankles at his heart. I was obliged to tell you what I thought."

"Has this new commander," demanded the second lieutenant, "been in any rough engagement?"

"My faith!" said Pierre, "I do not know. Longetour! Do you recollect that name, doctor?"

"No more than the fish at the tail of which this fin used to wag," said the doctor. "Do you know, Merval?"

"No; I do not."

"It would be a pity to spoil a good crew," said the doctor. "With those dare-devils, we must have a commander of metal. But I am easy on that matter. They know the Salamander, and they will send no one to her except a regular sea-wolf. By-the-bye, Merval," added the doctor, tracing a geometrical figure upon his plate, "where have you served? Do you come from a Brest or a Toulon school?"

"Sir," said the second lieutenant, "our family never left their legitimate sovereign."

"Ah! I understand," said the doctor, shaking his head; "you have served with the English. That, young man, ill becomes a Frenchman."

"Sir!" said the young lieutenant, turning pale.

"I say, that it ill becomes a Frenchman," replied the doctor, still tracing the geometrical figures.

Pierre, who was previously absorbed in thought, cried, "Come, come, gentlemen!"

"I am insulted, sir," said the young man, burning with rage.

"Mervall! Mervall!" said the first lieutenant.

"I told him that to serve the English ill became a Frenchman. That's all."

"You will give me satisfaction, and that immediately," said the young man, rising from the table.

"Oh, oh! oh, oh!" shouted the doctor, still tracing the figures. "Old Garnier has now been at sea twenty-five years, and a child starts up to frighten him. Since Trafalgar, sir, I have seen many fights, and have been wounded five times, for which I received this piece of blue ribbon. My friend, Pierre, will tell you if ever I was afraid in the heat of an engagement to dress the wounds of my sailors. And now I must fight for a trifle. Know, sir, that I owe my life to my brave seamen, who have been under my care for the last eleven years. They are my own children; they have confidence in me; and, when they suffer, they always find relief from their old Garnier. I don't belong to myself—you can ask them if I may fight you. But I have no enmity to you, nor do I wish to hurt you. Only you served with the English; and, in my opinion, that ill becomes a Frenchman. That's all."

"Mervall," said the lieutenant, "I beseech you—I order you to listen to me."

The second lieutenant was, at length, pacified. Being full of noble qualities, brave and loyal, he was the first to hold out his hand to the doctor, who said, pressing it cordially, "I have told you what I thought; but we may now sail together a hundred years, and the thing will never be mentioned by me. You see I must always speak my mind."

A sailor entered, and, addressing the first lieutenant, said, "Lieutenant, the gig is lying off, with M. Paul on board."

"Tell M. Paul to wait for me in my cabin—then haul up the gig."

Pierre Huet, showing the example, rose from the table, saying, "You will not forget, purser, to pay our men."

"I will begin at twelve, lieutenant. You may tell them so."

"That will do," said Pierre, who hurried to his own cabin, where his son was waiting his arrival.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MIDSHIPMAN.

We must say a few words about this young lad, who had scarcely reached the age of sixteen; who was full of all the illusions of that age, full of dreams, bright and pleasing, of charms, and of poesy. He was endowed with one of those open and candid hearts that believe in everything; that, at the recital of grief, or at the mention of a noble action, weep with joy or with sorrow. His tender and pure soul believed in everything, admired everything, and was happy in everything. To Paul life was a prism, in which love, glory, and fortune were reflected in dazzling and bewitching colours—to him all was sun and spring, confidence and virtue. Paul loved his father with the most tender affection; but an ideal object of worship inflamed his ardent soul; that was a lovely young woman, a lovely creature that he saw in his dreams, that held out in perspective happiness—eternal happiness.

Eternal! yes. For according to his imagination, he would never leave that adored woman, neither in this world nor in that to come; he would live with her—would die with her; and, afterwards, would become with her an angel in heaven.

Admirable dream of a noble and guileless heart. The tender recollection of a beloved mother had purified his soul—for his thoughts were full of her; and he imagined that one day he would render to the fair creature that he would love, all the pure and touching affection which his mother had had for him—for she was now no more.

Pierre had lost his wife before his son had reached his eighth year; and at that early age he took him on board the *Salaman-der*. So the poor child, when very young, was deprived of the maternal solicitude which a wife heaps upon a son in the absence of her husband—double solicitude, for it is well known that when a mother dreads the danger that her husband daily experiences, she shows her grief in tenderness to her child.

Since that fatal event, Paul never left his father. Brought up on board the vessel, nurtured in that rude and savage school, surrounded by the grandeur of nature, by the flashing of the lightning, by the roaring of the tempest, by the ocean reflecting, like a mighty mirror, the azure of a brilliant sky—Paul was keenly sensible to all the sublimities, to the harmonies of nature, and they tended to germinate in that ardent and buoyant heart the most pure and noble sentiments.

At times, cradled in the fore-top, Paul would smile at the roaring of the tempest; and when the old boatswain would put him

upon his back, and take him up to the top-gallant-mast, often would Paul, in his foolish joy, seize hold of a rope, balance himself upon it, then he would allow himself to hang in carelessness over the frightful abyss.

Such pastimes, such an existence, developed the mind of Paul, and strengthened his physical powers. When he had reached his tenth year, Pierre relieved the *keepers*, as he called them, of his son, and took upon himself the charge of his education.

Paul not only having theory but practice to aid him, made rapid progress, was appointed midshipman, and received his first wound in one of the Salamander's glorious engagements. His father saw him fall, bleeding and helpless; he turned away his eyes, and continued to give his orders with coolness and courage; but no sooner had the combat terminated, than that man of iron, who remained unshaken in the midst of fire, wept like a young mother, by the side of his son. Whole nights he waited with him, watched over him; and when Paul, no longer knowing his father, called upon him, what grief was there in the voice of Pierre, as he said, "I am with you, my boy. O God! I am by your side. It is your father's hand that you are pressing. O, my boy! my boy! he no longer knows me."

Paul heard not his father's voice, but continued saying, "My father! my father!"

Instinctive and sublime invocation; last cry of hope and of love! admirable illusion, which, colouring darkness, makes the child believe that his father or mother can, like God, prolong his days.

But Death at this time did not fix his shaft in this sensitive and noble heart. Paul recovered, and his father became almost mad with joy. In the long, dreary evenings he would sit by the side of his son, telling him stories of his voyages, and the dreadful encounters that he had been engaged in; and when sleep closed the eyes of Paul, his father would cease speaking, would draw in his breath, and contemplate his boy with love, with idolatry. A tear would start to his eye, but it was one of joy. His son had been saved when on the brink of eternity.

When the Salamander left the port to attack the English frigate just mentioned, the corvette's last engagement before 1814, Paul had sufficiently recovered to resume his duties. That combat was a bloody one, in which Pierre received a dangerous wound. Then it was the son who watched over his father with fear and affection; who tended him with all that devotedness which characterises a noble heart.

Pierre got well; it was a day of rejoicing with the crew, for Pierre Huet was as much loved as he was feared. These opposite sentiments he inspired by his severity, and by the attachment he had for his sailors.

If jealousy could take possession of a noble mind, Pierre might have been angry at the influence which his son exercised over the crew.

It is a strange anomaly in the nature and disposition of man, that the most powerful and savage beings bend to those who are the most weak and inoffensive. The influence of Paul seemed to act like magic on board the Salamander; he held a sovereign sway over men of iron, who had been in twenty battles, and who scarcely knew that they had ever run any danger.

These men, energetic and powerful, were, like most sailors, superstitious; they believed in the prediction of some old man, that the fate of the Salamander was linked with that of the young midshipman.

But never did the vessel appear so clean, and in such good order, as when Paul had the charge of it. He was the guardian angel of the Salamander—good, courageous, intrepid, and generous, and his outward form corresponded with the beauty of his mind. He was of the middle stature, handsome and athletic, with lively and expressive features. His long chesnut hair shaded a high forehead, that was as white and smooth as that of a young woman; his large dark eyes were piercing and intellectual; while his aquiline nose, his arched mouth, and dimple chin, gave to his countenance an expression of hauteur and pride that became him admirably. Add to this, a rosy tint, which, with the least emotion, became purple, and moustaches that shaded his ruby lips, and you will have a charming face, capable of turning the heads of half of the young girls of St. Tropez.

But Pierre Huet would not allow the young man to go on shore: not that he wished to make a monk of his son, but he knew that the crew of the Salamander had rendered themselves obnoxious to the people of Provence by declaring their opposite opinions; and like a good and affectionate father, for the safety of his son, he had to restrict him.

Paul, however, the previous evening, notwithstanding the order of the lieutenant that no one should go ashore, lowered himself into the water, and swam to the pier

CHAPTER VII.

THE FATHER AS LIEUTENANT.

"May I be informed, sir," said Pierre, seating himself at a considerable distance from the young man, "May I be informed why you went on shore without permission."

It was the superior officer that spoke. The father added mentally, "And at the risk of drowning yourself, thoughtless boy."

"I was going to tell you, father." Saying these words, Paul approached the lieutenant, took hold of his hand, leant his elbow on the arm-chair, and gazed affectionately in his face.

The worthy officer, at the sound of "father," pronounced with a soft and affectionate voice, felt his resolution giving way. He, however, withdrew his hand, and said sternly, "This is an affair of the service, sir. Keep at a respectful distance, and call me lieutenant."

A crimson hue spread over the countenance of the lad, and the tone of his voice instantly changed. Drawing back his head in haughtiness, he said, in a firm voice, "I absented myself because I was tired of being on board. I was wrong. Let me be punished for my fault."

"I wish to know, sir, what took you on shore."

"Lieutenant, I cannot answer you. I have failed in my duty—punish me accordingly."

"Sir," exclaimed the father.

"Lieutenant, my naval life concerns you—my private one affects no one but my father."

"Then, my son, your father wishes to know."

"Ah, that's different," said Paul, with a look of satisfaction. "Now you shall know everything."

"I see," said the lieutenant to himself, "I must yield to his caprices; if I were to act as superior, he is such a devil of a lad he would tell me nothing, and now, in using soft means with him, I shall know all. Besides, I would rather embrace him than scold him, for how much does he resemble his dear mother."

"Now, Paul, what have you to say?"

The gallant lad approached his father, and, leaning on his arm, said, in a deep voice, and with a sigh, "Father, I think I'm in love."

"What's that, Paul?"

"You know, father, that eight days ago I went in the shallop for casks. Well, while the men were stowing them away, I took a walk along the shore, and there, in that little cottage, surrounded by orange trees, which you can see from here—"

"Well; I see it. Go on."

"I saw, father, a young girl who was looking, indeed I did not know what she was looking at—"

"Well!"

"Well, father, I hid myself behind a rock, so that she could not see me, and I remained more than half an hour gazing on her. My eyes became dazzled, and my heart beat; oh, how it throbbed, and then I thought I loved."

"That was the cause, sir," said Pierre, in anger, "of the delay of the shallop."

"Lieutenant," replied the young man with his former firmness of voice, "you were satisfied with the reasons that I gave you."

"Paul !"

"Come, father, do not be angry; you shall know all. Yesterday evening I put my clothes into a box, lowered myself and it into the water, and swam ashore, pushing it before me."

"What imprudence! You know that your wound often prevents you from swimming."

"Oh, father, do you think that I took time to think of that. No, I only thought of seeing her, but I did not."

"And what were you doing all night, Paul?"

"I walked before her window, and would have been doing so till now had not that rascal La Joie found me out, and had I not been afraid of making you uneasy."

"And this is all, Paul? and you have only told me the truth."

"I never tell a lie, father."

"Well, I believe you; but do you know, my boy, that all this is very bad. The people of Provence do not like our crew; they are malicious, and I am uneasy about your safety as well as about that of our sailors. Promise me that you will not go again on shore without permission."

"No, father, I will not neglect my duty as midshipman, but I will not promise you that."

"Headstrong boy. You will at least go armed?"

"Yes, father, that I will promise you."

"Oh, Paul, one day you will reproach me for having been too indulgent. But as you openly failed in discipline, my dear boy, you must be confined for twenty-four hours, but I will keep you company."

"My good, my dear father," said the young man.

"Yes, Paul, but if you knew what I suffered; I did not sleep all night. I was thinking of you; for I have only you in this world. Remember that, my boy."

Here a large tear rolled down the father's cheek, and a knock at the same moment was heard at the door.

"Come in," said the lieutenant, turning away his head to hide his humid eyes. "What is it?"

"Lieutenant," said the sailor, "the purser wishes to know if he may begin the pay."

"Certainly; let the crew know it."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PAY DAY.

After the first lieutenant's order, the purser began to pay the crew, and the silence that ordinarily reigned on board the Salamander was interrupted by a metallic sound, which proceeded from all parts of the vessel.

"At last," said the purser—who, to fulfil his functions, had clothed himself in a silver-trimmed coat—"at last these cursed arrears are paid. Three years' arrears—it was high time with such a set of dare-devils."

At this moment a kind of growling noise, proceeding from the outside of the door, interrupted the purser in his soliloquy.

"What's the matter? what do you want?"

The noise became louder, and, at last, these words were distinguishable, "My good purser—It is I, purser!"

"And who are you? and what the devil brought you here?" said the purser, opening the door, seizing the person by the jacket, and pulling him under the window, to contemplate him at his ease.

Without exaggeration, it was a head worthy of Rembrandt. Figure to yourself a man about the middle stature, powerfully built, a face as dark as purple, surrounded by black hair as stiff and shaggy as a house broom. An enormous gash, beginning at his forehead and terminating at his chin, had deprived him of one of his eyes. Two shirts, a red and white one, a long jacket, with a yellow cord at the sleeves, and a pair of coarse blue trousers, completed his dress, which was rather a strange one for a hot day in the middle of July.

"Ah! it is you, Master Bouquin. Well! what do you want? Answer me."

"Oh! purser," said the sailor, twisting the cap which he held in his hand into various shapes, and rolling his one eye like a frightened bull. "Purser—it is, purser—it is that I think I am fleeced."

"What!"

"Yes, my good purser, they have cheated me."

"How! what do you mean?"

"Three years, purser—three years' arrears, at 700 francs, is 2100, and I only fobbed 1719, 5 sous, and 2 liards." Saying this, he drew forth an immense bag from under his arm.

"Ah! you wish your account cleared up, do you?"

"No, purser, I wish my account."

"There's nothing more just, my boy. The devil may run away with me, if it will ever be said that I refused to enlighten

you in this matter. Oh, no! you have earned your money hard enough, my brave fellow, and shall not be cheated of a sous; what was I saying, a sous—no, not the hundreth part of a liard. Do you hear that, Master Bouquin; you shall not be wronged of a liard.”

“An old cry, purser.”

“What do you mean?”

“I say, an old cry; for the purser that was here before you said the same thing. It is your calling to say so, as it is ours to sing out, ‘All hands, up anchor, ahoy!’ Go on, purser, I am listening.”

“Well, then, 700 francs a year is so much a month, so much a week, so much a day; but there are, Master Bouquin, bissextile years, and months with only twenty-eight days, consequently, the value of money varies; and the Spanish pieces, which you have received in payment, being worth forty-seven centimes more than the hundred sous pieces, which—you understand me.”

“Yes, purser,” said the sailor, biting his lips ferociously, and paying the greatest possible attention.

“Which,” resumed the purser with volubility, “decreases the capital and the total of the sums due that the treasury scrupulously pays you—do you hear that, Master Bouquin—scrupulously pays you, to liquidate all arrears. You see it is clear enough, is it not?”

“The arrears—yes, purser, I begin to see through it,” said the bewildered seaman, who pressed his forehead tightly with his huge hands, as if forcing the purser’s lucid explanation into his brain.

“Your 700 francs,” resumed the purser, “having undergone fluctuations effected by the change in the value of the Spanish pieces, the crowns having been affected by a notable defalcation, in the value of the pieces opposed to them, and, from the bissextile years and months of twenty-eight days, the result necessarily—you understand. Do not be bashful. If it is not clear to you, let me know. Do you comprehend me, Master Bouquin?”

“Y—e—s, purser,” said the sailor, rolling his one eye in such a manner that the sight would have excited fear in the breast of the bravest.

“You see the diminution of the value of the pieces, the diminution of pay effected by the bissextile years, and the months of twenty-eight days; and, on balancing the matter on one side, that is, to your advantage—do you hear that, Master Bouquin?—to your advantage, the value of the crowns and six-franc pieces is enormously great, and affects wonderfully the hundred-sous pieces, and, therefore, the deduction of 475 francs. So, in adding 475 francs to your 1785, that will give you 2260. Now, remark this, Master Bouquin, 2100 francs was the sum that was owing you. Is that true? Now, answer me.”

"That's true, my good purser," said Bouquin, wiping the perspiration that streamed from his forehead. "They only owed 2100 francs."

"Eh, well! you see, then, on the contrary, you owe 160 francs, since the treasury was only indebted to you 2100. It is not I who say so, it is yourself; you will find that that will amount to 2260 francs. So you see, my brave fellow, that I could demand 160 francs of you, which I ought to do, by way of punishing you for mistrusting your superiors and the government, who always give you more than they ought, and cheat themselves to enrich you; but for this time I will act generously. Let this serve as a lesson: keep the 160 francs that you have received more than your due—do you hear, Master Bouquin—keep the 160 francs, and let them influence you to bless the order of things that heaven has accorded to you. Go, Master Bouquin, and tell your comrades that, if they have any questions to ask, I am ready and willing to answer them as clearly and as lucidly as I have answered you. Oh, no! no partiality; what I do to one I will do to another."

On saying these words, the purser gathered up his papers and books, placed them under his arm, entered his room, and shut the door, leaving Master Bouquin stupefied, bewildered, and, what is stranger still, convinced of the generosity and disinterestedness of government in regard to him.

"Holy powers," said he, wiping his forehead, "I would rather take three reefs in the mainsail in the midst of a storm than be obliged to listen again, and comprehend all that the purser has said. What language! and what a sermon! It appears, nevertheless, that it is I who gain the 160 francs. What the devil, then, brought that long La Joie, piping and singing out that the purser had fleeced us like sheep."

Bouquin thereupon hastened in search of La Joie, and, on finding him, shouted out,

"Well, La Joie, we were wrong, my boy, it seems that the fluctuation and the brixtile years, and the diminution and the deduction, and, in fact, I don't know the names, which is the same thing, are the causes of us only losing 160 francs instead of 450; and if the government warn't a good sailor, it would have forced us to dub up the 450, and that the purser has acted square and tight."

La Joie looked fixedly at the one eye of Bouquin, took his long whistle from his pocket, and blew two long shrill notes.

"Go to the devil," said Bouquin, who seemed to understand the expressive harmony of La Joie. "May I dangle to the mizen mast by a stiff rope, if it isn't true."

Here La Joie again placed the whistle to his mouth, and produced the same sound.

"You are as headstrong as a donkey," said the irritated

Bouquin, "you see, La Joie, you must go yourself, and he'll tell you the same thing." Saying these words he strutted away, grumbling and swearing against all d—d fools.

La Joie, the boatswain, was one of the most mute and sombre-looking beings that could possibly be conceived. He had formed the habit of speaking as seldom as possible; and generally answered his equals and superiors by modulated notes upon his whistle, which all on board perfectly understood. Thus to La Joie that instrument was a new language, that belonged entirely to himself. At one time it expressed his grief or sadness, at another his rage or good humour.

The shrill but modulated note, as it rent the air, and swelled into harmony, no sooner burst upon the ears of the sailors, than a voice might have been heard saying:—

"Ah, all's well. Master La Joie is in a pleasant gale."

On the contrary, if nothing was heard but a crotchety, expressed in dryness, and free from semi-breve shakes, a voice would have been heard to say:—

"There's a gale in the offing, my boys; and if it continues we shall soon have a shower of kicks and blows."

These meteorological and pschological predictions were generally realised; but that day all was hope and joy, which the pay had created in the bosoms of the sailors.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PROBLEM.

If there be such a think as happiness, it certainly existed that day on board the Salamander.

Happiness! Fantastic, yet real thing, which each mortal on this terrestrial sphere worships in various shapes and divers aspects. Even as at the decline of day, when the sun sows the atmosphere with prismatic colours, and inundates the horizon with the glowing light, which, from the most dazzling white, loses itself in a sombre red of fiery hue, you may at times see a gilded fugitive cloud, that the breeze of the evening wafts in the midst of the vapours of that burning sky.

That cloud has only one aspect, and still it has a thousand. To one it is a gothic colonnade, elegant and slender, with dazzling windows. To another, a tree with branches of gold and leaves of purple. This one sees in it, amidst huge drapery, the countenance of Jehovah; that one can distinguish the deli-

cate and aerial lineaments of a young girl with the neck of a swan.

Such is happiness—that thing of reality and of ideality which is truthful even as light and sound, but like them unseizable—happiness which assumes by turns the most opposite forms, and which retains none.

Is happiness, then, the coral lips of a young girl, that breathes in thy ear a soft word of tenderness—a trembling hand that shuns not thine? Is it a long, long walk on the enamelled sward, under a vault of tall oaks—a walk with an arm linked with thine, mid silence and reproaches, sadness and girlish joys and fears—when all is love, avowed love, and still that word has never been pronounced?

Or is true happiness—the lasting happiness, that which bathes, which inundates the soul with celestial joy after the avowal; when, palpitating and happy at the sacrifice she has made for thee, her weal or woe being in thy power; or, when bending on her knees, she says, with a smile full of tears, “O, now my honour is at thy mercy, my life is thine, my whole thoughts are thine, my soul is thine; you see that one word from thee can render me the most wretched of women—that one word from thee can kill me. Adored angel! my love is not love; it is a new feeling that has no name—a feeling that effaces and absorbs everything, and leaves me only to feel that I exist.”

Or rather, is happiness a disregard for the deceptions of mankind, because thou expecteth such and foreseeth all.

Thus, should you meet a lovely young girl standing on the brink of perdition—about to be engulfed in vice—you pity her, draw her from the fatal vortex, clothe her in perfumed robes, and try to give a new soul to that body; try to sow the seeds of gratitude; then, thanks to your heavenly and disinterested solicitude, her mind expands; she stands before you in gracefulness and beauty, and you smile at the change you have effected. The evening comes, and finding that the object of your care has absconded with your footman, you shrug your shoulders, and say, laughingly, “I expected as much;” and not a fibre vibrates in your withered heart.

Is that happiness? or, otherwise, should a companion of boyhood, to whom you have given the name of brother, and whom you have supported by the fruits of your sword—a brother to whom you told your secrets, and for whom you often suffered; well, should this grateful and feeling brother, profiting by a reaction in politics, betray you, give you up to the opposite party, get you sent to the scaffold, and on your going thither, he should come to see you, and shout out in laughter as you passed, “Go along, lazy fellow; sooner or later you must have come to this;” a feeling of hatred and of vengeance would not kindle in your withered heart.

Truly, would that be happiness? That moral death of the heart, that insensibility to joy or grief—does that constitute happiness?

Or rather does happiness revel itself in the midst of luxury and wealth—in the palace, or in the royal grounds amid the barking of dogs and the neighing of high-mettled horses? In the chase, exhilarating chase, amid the bounding of horses, and the thousand voices that break upon the ear? or is it at the bottom of the drunkard's glass, in which he leaves his reason, drowning even the imagination that it first excited.

Happiness! Does it dwell in the abode of that worthy grocer, who is always dressed in the same way, always red-faced, smiling, honest, and gay?

Or dwells it with that man whose wife calls him Veronique; who smiles and speaks to him in terms the most loving and amorous, but who shows her white teeth to the first lad that squeezes her leg against the counter?

This long and fatiguing digression upon that which exists and does not exist—this rapid and incomplete analysis of divers tastes, may give an idea of the different kinds of happiness, neither more true nor more false than those which existed on board the Salamander.

In fact the majority of the sailors were, some on their knees, others seated, some standing, counting and recounting their crowns; then rattling them into their purses.

In looking forward to the hour when they would enjoy their respective pleasures, they spoke in hilarity and delight. "A present to Paul," was heard in a gruff voice. "One to old Garnier," bawled a second; and a third and fourth shouted out, "Remember our brave lieutenant."

The half of their pay was destined, according to a custom, which is scrupulously observed among our sailors, to a father or mother, wife or children—then the remainder was devoted to presents and pleasure.

"Hurrah!" shouted one, swinging his purse, or rather bag, over his head; "there's at the bottom of this, thirty tankards of the best wine that ever were discharged into the throat of an honest seaman."

"By all the *alcaouetas* of Cadiz!" exclaimed another, hugging his stocking-formed purse, "I can feel here the skin smooth as velvet; in thee I can see eyes of jet, and necks whiter than the lily. Come Rose, Therese, Antoinette, come, that I may kiss thee. Thy soft lips will make a breach in this well-loaded purse. Come nearer. Come, that I may press thee to my arms." Here the sailor kissed Rose, Therese, and Antoinette, in the venerable person of his old money-bag.

"And what will you do, Geromin, with your sack?" said a sailor to his companion, who had just finished counting his mo-

ney, and who was saying to himself, "Ah! the scoundrel has been playing the shark."

This, perhaps, was the only one, with the exception of Master Bouquin, that thought of squaring his accounts.

"I," said Geromin, with gravity, "I shall buy a purser's uniform, a purser's sword; dam me, all that a purser wears; then I will say to a tradesman, to a soldier, or a caulker, 'Go, and dress yourself like a purser.'"

"And what then?" demanded several voices.

"And then I will say to him, 'Now I will give you all the money that you want; but you must allow me to lash you till you are as striped as a zebra. Damme, if it is not annoying to be fleeced in this way. Then, you know, I will imagine that I am revenging myself upon a real purser,—a thief of a purser, to whom I am giving back that which he has taken from me.'"

"Bravo, bravo, Geromin!"

"Bah!" said another, "I will go and assemble all the musicians that I can find at St. Tropez, then I shall march at their head—fiddles, clarionets, bugles, trumpets, guitars, and pianos, and will make them play—let me see, Oh yes, 'Here's a bumper to all good lasses,' and 'The budding of love.'"

"Not at all, comrade. Make each play a different tune; that will be true harmony."

"Yes, you are right; a different air, and all while I'm eating, drinking, walking, sleeping."

"All that," interrupted a gunner, "is not worthy changing this dress for a shoemaker's. A surtout, a hat, and a pair of boots; there's something for those who, like us, are obliged to trudge all their lives with naked feet upon this devil of a deck."

"With braces, too, with braces," cried Geromin. "There's a luxury. I shall buy them by the dozen, I who never had a pair on but once, and that was at Calcutta."

"Ah, Calcutta," cries another, "Calcutta. There's a country for you. Do you remember Calcutta, Geromin. That's a happy country, where we can maul a couple of Indians for a handful of rice. What a life! always in a sedan, or on a camel or elephant. And the women! Fire of my flesh! charming Bayadères, naked; yes, without clothes, who fan you with peacock's tails."

"And the food, ah, junk so strong that when we are done eating, we could draw the skin from off our tongue. Ah," the sailor added, with a sigh of regret, "there's happiness."

Night closed, while the sailors, engaged in the midst of their jokes and pleasing chit-chat, were revealing their thoughts by extolling the respective desires that gladdened and cheered each throbbing heart.

CHAPTER X.

THE SALAMANDER RECEIVED HER PAY YESTERDAY.

Stranger, artist, or traveller, thou who leaneth on thy staff, who wipeth the perspiration from thy forehead, and lendeth an attentive ear to the distant and confused noise that breaks upon the prevailing silence—fear nothing; there is no danger; only wait a day before thou enterest St. Tropez; for be it known, the Salamander received her pay yesterday.

Stranger, the night is soft and serene, and orange trees perfume the air; the sky is blue, and the stars are twinkling in the heavens; seat thyself at the foot of that wild mulberry tree, with leaves of velvet; rest thyself on the summit of yonder mountain, and, perhaps, before the break of morn, thou shalt see a strange, an unknown spectacle. Perhaps, the sweet repose which thou shalt have upon the embalmed sward, will be disturbed; thy eyes may open to a glaring light—to flames curling in the air. Thou shalt lift up thy eyelids, and the gulf, sea, and sky will be illumined—covered with light; St. Tropez will be burning, and shouts of joy, screams, songs, imprecations, will mingle with the ringing of bells, the beating of drums, the explosion of fire-arms—for the Salamander received her pay yesterday.

Or shouldst thou, to-morrow, if thou passeth the night in comfort, wend thy way to the town, broken slates, windows smashed, doors broken upon, and shutters scattered here and there, will meet thy view. Thou shalt also see trembling women coming to the windows, and in fear venture to look into the street; children, too, approaching the doors, and some, more hardy than others, breaking a father's mandate, issue into the street, pick up a sailor's cap, a cravat, and pieces of money. Then if thou asketh what has been the matter, a voice will say, "Nothing, sir, nothing; only the Salamander was paid yesterday."

The night had advanced; the crew of the Salamander had devised a plan, to execute which none could be more resolute. All knew that the lieutenant was inflexible—that he rarely gave permission to go on shore.

And thou must know, stranger, that it is easier to find a young girl morally a virgin at the age of fifteen, a friend that respects thy mistress, a horse without faults, a book without a preface, a declining sun without poetry, a didactic poem amusing, a river without water, than prevent a ship's crew who has money from going ashore; and the Salamander was paid yesterday.

Towards midnight the officer of the watch, seeing everything quiet and comfortable, told La Joie to look after the vessel, left the deck, went to his cabin, and sought repose in his hammock. The worthy boatswain watched as long as he could, but the weather being splendid, and no danger to be apprehended, he stretched himself along the deck, and fell asleep.

A sailor, who perceived this, hastened to his comrades, who were in their hammocks with their clothes on, and whispered, "Now's the time."

At these magic words the crew tumbled out of their hammocks, stole on deck, and, with little noise, succeeded in getting into the ship's boats, and all—firebrands and sailors—to the number of ninety-two, rowed cheerily towards the shore.

In half an hour they were on land, and had, by taking away all the boats, put it out of the officers' power to pursue them.

This flight was natural—in the order of things. It was the physical result of the magnetic influence of silver upon the organisation of the sailor.

What would have formed an excellent study for the physiognomist, was the expression of La Joie's countenance, when, awakened by the fresh and piquant breeze of the morning, he rubbed his eyes, looked round, and saw that the ten sailors whom he had left on the watch, were no longer at their posts.

He thought he was dreaming; he rose, crossed the deck, and saw no one—absolutely no one.

"The scoundrels," said he to himself, "they have gone to their hammocks, have they? I shall make the dogs dance a hornpipe to as strange music as ever was piped into seamen's ears. And this," he added, drawing forth his whistle, "will let them know that the dance is about to begin."

A shrill, piercing, menacing sound rent the air. La Joie put his whistle into his pocket, and crossing his arms, with his head bent, he paced the deck, muttering frightful oaths.

Not a sound was heard on the vessel. There she lay, like a whale sleeping on an azure sea.

La Joie stopped short, and, for the first time, I think, for thirteen years, the appearance—the feeble and uncertain appearance of a smile, curled the corner of his mouth.

"They have the fear of hell, and dare not come up. It is, at all events, satisfactory to be able to do that with this."

Here he drew his whistle from his pocket, and looked at it with satisfaction.

"To be able to make eighty dare-devils shake that never feared neither fire nor water; to make them tremble more than a storm in the tropics, or a volley of metal could do."

La Joie again listened. Still the same silence.

"They are huddled together, like congers in their holes, and dare not budge. They know well that the whistle warned them

that the first that showed his mug above-board, would receive such rounds of kicks that he would not know what to do with them."

Still the same silence.

"Pshaw," said the boatswain, who, by chance, was in a very good humour, "perhaps my whistle was a little too harsh. That may well be, for I don't remember ever blowing so furiously before. Let me see; I will soften the tone, for this must terminate, as the sun is up, and the flags are not yet hoisted. Hereupon La Joie produced a sound, which, if it did not announce serene weather, it had nothing in it that augured a storm.

No sound. All was silent. Then you ought to have seen La Joie upon the fore-castle—his arm extended, his whistle in one hand, his eyes staring in stupor, and his nostrils swollen.

Again he applied the whistle to his mouth, but the sound was short and loud; then it became louder and louder, while the enraged boatswain stamped each time furiously upon the deck.

Still all was silent.

At length, in exasperation, he rushed to a hatchway; it was fastened in the inside; then to another, and then to another, but to the same effect.

The blood rushed to La Joie's face—he flew to the bulwarks, leant over, and seeing that the boats were gone, the frightful truth flashed across his mind.

He then stamped, leaped, bellowed, and foamed at the mouth. Handspikes, bars of iron, all that came in his way, he hurled with violence upon the deck.

At this infernal noise, the lieutenant, the doctor, the purser, and the few that remained on board, showed their faces and half-opened eyes at the port-holes.

"What's the matter," shouted the lieutenant.

"The fellow has a violent attack of fever," said the doctor.

"He must be secured and bled."

"La Joie, La Joie," cried the lieutenant, imperatively, "what do you mean by this? what is the matter?"

"Gone, sir, gone. The dogs are all on shore."

"Who?"

"The crew, lieutenant. The rascals are all on shore, and we have taken away all the boats."

"We ought to have thought of that. They were paid yesterday. Have they also taken the yawl?"

"I did not think of it—I will see," said La Joie; and a moment afterwards he shouted out, "Gone, too, lieutenant, but it was Paul who took it, for this piece of ribbon was fastened in a chink."

"Cursed boy," said the lieutenant, "to set such an example."

"But what shall we do? What's to be done?" said La Joie, biting the ends of his fingers.

"We must wait. They will come back soon; but what I am afraid of is the disputes, the fights, they may have with the people. And my son, my son, who may be forced into their brawls. Oh curses! curses!"

"Do not be uneasy," said the worthy doctor. "The rascals will return with broken heads and bruised bones, and they will *only require my lancet and ointment to restore them.*"

"Be assured, doctor," said La Joie, "that skulls will be cracked at St. Tropez; that knives will be in full operation, and that there will be as much blood spilled as wine. Still we must wait, as the lieutenant said—for the Salamander was paid yesterday."

CHAPTER XI.

ALICE.

The night was warm and suffocating. The glimmering light of a lamp cast the shadows of different objects upon the walls of a room that was neatly furnished, and shot its rays upon a young girl seated in bed, with her face in her two hands, and apparently absorbed in reflection.

Her naked arms, white and slender, indicated one of those delicate, yet nervous and pliant, forms, which, by a singular caprice in nature, has within it a loving and passionate soul.

Her long chestnut ringlets clustered round her lovely neck, and veiling the countenance of the young girl, left only exposed to view a little round and transparent chin, in which the azure veins were observable.

Slightly shuddering, she drew back her head, heaved a long sigh, stretched her arms, then looking at a gold watch that was hanging in the alcove near an ivory crucifix, she said;—"Only two o'clock! Oh, what a night—what a night. Never did the time appear to pass so slowly. Besides, I'm warm—suffocate, and my hands are burning. Oh! what can be the matter with me?"

She then lay down, crossed her arms upon the side of her bed casting her head backwards upon her pillow.

Then the vacillating light gave to her countenance an aerial, confused, and uncertain appearance, leaving the idea in the mind that the lamp, which at one moment burnt brightly, and at another dimly, gave to that charming countenance an expression of mild serenity, then of bitter contumely.

But are they shadows and fantastic lights that at one

time brightened up and at another darkened the countenance of the young girl? Were they not rather the changes and variations of a virgin soul, which shows itself at one time sad and miserable, at another gay and happy?

For who can fathom the heart of a young girl—a chasm a thousand times more profound than that of a woman. Between these two there is the difference of ideality from truth. To a woman the future is certain—is almost foreseen; to a young girl all is incertitude, vague desires, hope, fear, joy, grief. Her soul is an æolian harp, that vibrates with a soft breath of wind and whose harmony is confused, strange, interrupted, incomplete; which, nevertheless, delights and saddens, and brings forth smiles and tears.

“Oh,” said Alice, “I wish I could not think. Oh! that I were a rose, a tree; a bird that flies in the air; a flower by the borders of a rivulet; a flower that fades and dies without regretting a mother. But still a flower is isolated, and when the sun sets what sadness must it feel. A flower like the one I had in my bosom at the ball last evening. To see it so green, with colours so lovely, we might think it everlasting, but how mistaken; and to think that a flower in the field fades in a day, while artificial ones retain for a long time their false and borrowed colours.”

I do not know how many passing and fugitive thoughts revealed to her, by this simple comparison, the advantage that a heartless coquette has over a young, loving, and ingenuous maid.

“The ball!” she repeated, and the melancholy expression of her countenance disappeared, and her eyes sparkled—by hazard the lamp also burnt brighter. “The ball! It was a fine assemblage. It was a dance, a lovely dance, where ladies glittered in diamonds, and smiled; and there were gentlemen, too, who smiled; but their cheeks alone indicated their smiles, for heedlessness was stamped upon their brows. Still there was the sparkling of diamonds, the glare of a thousand lights, the dazzling of chrystal, sweet odour that spread its incense around, and I do not know how, but all this only pleased the eye. My soul was empty, and I remember nothing, for the heart has no relish for that which is only noise and outward show. Oh! how sad it is to have no sweet recollections! no one to think of! to be thus left is sad; sad, sad, indeed!”

The eyes of the young girl filled with tears, and, sighing, she turned round, placing her two hands above her head.

The lamp was nearly extinguished, and the shadows were appearing and disappearing upon the wall.

At this moment the eyes of Alice fell upon the white cross that was fixed in the alcove.

“Behold,” said she, with a low voice; “behold my mother’s crucifix, which in her dying moments she pressed to her lips.”

Here a tear stole down her pale cheeks.

"That crucifix," she said, "was always near me in the convent. Oh! why was I taken from it? I was happy then; happy when robed in white, when singing with my companions beautiful chaunts to the sound of the sonorous organ. And the roses with which we decked ourselves for the holy fetes, and the dresses that we made the poor sisters; and our hymns to Christ, who sacrificed himself to save the world. What devotedness! Why did they take me away from the convent, where I was so happy. To love the Lord—to pray to him all day. Is there something beyond the happiness that we experience when praying to him? yes, it is to pray to him for some cherished one. But I ought not to be unhappy. I am going to see my father, who left me when a child. Oh God! have pity on me, and watch over me during the perilous voyage."

The lamp flickered, casting fantastic and trembling shadows on the walls; the darkness created fear in the heart of the young girl, who, like all young and tender creatures when carried away by the necessity of the moment, sought in it the means of searching into futurity.

"Oh," said the young girl, "I shall be wretched on this earth, if the lamp go out before I have said three times—'My mother, who is in heaven, pray to God for thy child.'"

And, pale and agitated, she began with a trembling voice:—"My mother, who is in heaven, pray to God for thy child."

The lamp flickered, casting a feeble light.

"My mother, who is in heaven, pray to God for thy child."

The lamp again flickered, then burnt brighter. The heart of Alice seemed relieved from an enormous weight, and she continued, in confidence—"My mother, who is in heaven—"

But the light became pale, flickered, and went out, before she had finished.

"Oh! my mother, I am lost!" cried the young girl, in anguish, while she hid her face in her hands.

The young girl had scarcely been a minute in this position when lifting her head, her face bathed in tears, she was struck with surprise and joy on seeing that a feeble ray of the sun had forced its way through a crevice in the window shutter, and fell upon the crucifix of her mother.

This faint and mysterious light relieved the prevailing obscurity, and like a ray of hope in the heart of a sufferer, it calmed the young girl, and rendered her sadness less cruel.

"Oh, my mother, thou hast heard thy child," she said, in delight; then she went upon her knees, and prayed to God.

Fatigued with recent emotions, she shut her humid eyes, half-opened her ruby lips, and muttering, "My mother—theaven—happiness," she fell asleep between a tear

Sleep on, young girl, sleep on. May heaven grant that this ray of morn prove the aurora of a lovely day for thee. Sleep on, sleep on, for perhaps thou shalt regret these agitated nights, painful and almost sleepless. Poor child! after having respired the atmosphere of this gay and happy world, where all to thee are flowers and perfumes, light and joy, love and burning desires; perhaps thou wilt regret those hours of solitude and of sad dreams; perhaps, in the midst of false gaiety, thou shalt regret the soft tears that thou hast shed when thinking of thy mother. Perhaps thou shalt regret that world, which was, as it were, thine own—the ideal world which was created alone for thee; thy world, where, conjuring up fifty futurities, thou couldst according to thy caprice, efface them with the breath of thy lips.

Sleep on, Alice, sleep on; and if thy virgin heart could enjoy the sufferings that it causes, I would tell thee that the son of the first lieutenant of the Salamander—that Paul, the handsome and timid Paul, whom thou knowest not, is seated, watching and suffering, at the base of the rocks that surround the walls of thy garden, gazing in the darkness of the night, with the hope of catching a glimpse of thy angelic countenance.

CHAPTER XII.

THE INN OF ST. MARCEL.

The St. Marcel Inn, acknowledged to be an excellent tavern, is situated on a lonely spot about a mile and a half from St. Tropez. There the devotee of Bacchus is not importuned by a pertinacious host, or disturbed by the exigent rules of the police; in consideration of which few mariners land at the port of St. Tropez that do not steer clear of all taverns till they arrive at the auberge of St. Marcel, which is always cheerful, and whose portals are opened widely to the sailor. Indeed, this tavern is for the poor seafarer a mistress that he is sure to find after a long absence, and whom, should the reception be cordial, he never asks how she has spent her time in his absence.

The reception at the *auberge* of St. Marcel was always cordial and free; a little interested, it is true, but what could you expect. The worthy host, versed in abstract sciences, had established a scale, which demonstrated to him mathematically that the sailor puts exactly five times less value upon his money than any other person; and, accordingly, he made him pay, mathematically, five times more for everything that he consumed. So much for the morality of the *auberge* of St. Marcel. As to

the *physical* qualities, it was white, with a handsome balustrade, in which was a beautiful vine, with green leaves, and brown and knotty twigs. A modest signboard, that represented St. Marcel, was suspended over the principal door, and in front were a number of trees, that shaded tables of stone, dispersed here and there under their delicious verdure.

It was late in the afternoon, and the sun had disappeared behind the mountains, casting bright and golden rays upon the white walls of the inn, and foretelling the approach of a lovely evening. Shouts, mingling with loud and boisterous songs, were echoed in the distance. A terrific noise burst forth, the windows were thrown open, and bottles, glasses, chairs, hats, and every portable object in the room were seen whizzing through the air, then lying scattered here and there on the grass plat before the door.

Up to the present time neither man, wife, nor child had disappeared from the windows, but it appeared that this sort of projectile was about to succeed the others, for, soon afterwards, the worthy host was seen dangling between heaven and earth, with a rope round his stomach. The invisible beings who held him, not knowing to an inch the exact height of the building, let go too soon, and caused the old fellow's descent of twelve feet to be somewhat rapid. No sooner had he gained his feet, than he ran to the door, and, on finding it fastened, he cried out, "Cursed dogs, you shall suffer for this."

Geromin, dressed as a purser, appearing at the window, with his eyes twinkling like stars, and his head powdered, shouted out, accompanied by fearful imprecations, "We beseeched you to go out, old sorcerer, because you annoyed us with your 'leave the house.'"

"But," said the host, in a rage, "you are turning my house topsy-turvy. You have broken into my cellar, you—"

"You will be paid for all."

"You break my chairs, tables, glasses, my—"

"You will be paid for all."

"Twice you have set fire to the house."

"You will be paid for it. Excellent idea," added Geromin, with delight, "we shall pay for your house—then it will be ours, and if you approach it to annoy us, by the piper that played before Moses, we will make you dance to the sound of pots and kettles. How much is this stable worth? tell us."

Here Geromin raised his head, and, like an architect, after gazing attentively at it from side to side, and from top to bottom, he said, "Will you take ten thousand francs for inside and outside, and leave us in peace. Come, that's a bargain, and before we go we shall make a fire of it in honour of St. James, for this is his day; and to show you that the firebrands are good fellows, we shall give you a present of the house *on fire*."

Delighted with this idea, Geromin, notwithstanding the pretestations of the host, disappeared.

Marius, the landlord, stood gazing at the windows, and trembling with fear, for he doubted not that the other sailors would willingly take Geromin's advice, and adopt this strange scheme.

Five minutes afterwards Geromin appeared with two large bags of money, and, throwing them at Marius, said, "There, dog of an oil eater, the house is now ours! Come, take the wing, or if we catch you, we will put a pair of spurs on your heels. Off, off, your sight annoys us as well as it does our ladies. Away with you."

"Ah," said Marius, picking up the money, "you chase me from my own house—thieves, brigands, Bonapartists, that you are. I know well what to do, scoundrels and cut-throats. Do you see these shutters, they are red, are they not? A fresh coat will be given to them; and it is you, brigands, that will furnish the paint."

"Stupid bear, you say that we shall paint your shutters; that is as we choose, since the house is our own. Do you hear that? Do you think that we are your slaves, cursed oil gobbler? Aye, aye, you would do well to cut your stick, otherwise we would have chalked up a fresh score with you. At last," added Geromin, with an air of satisfaction, as the landlord disappeared, "at last, we are at home—at our own fireside."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FINE ARTS.

Dost thou not love one of those imposing symphonies in which a hundred musicians express one sound out of a hundred—one harmony; when a hundred musicians read, with a clear, deep-toned voice, an immense musical poem, which is at one time lively and sad, at another pleasing and passionate.

Dost thou not love these divers sounds which are so opposite, which blend in one, and produce the most ravishing melody: the blast of the trumpet—the deep-toned bassoon—the plaintive tones of the violin—the sonorous vibrations of the violoncello—the rich notes of the cornet-à-piston—and the soft-toned flute. What a contrast of sounds! And to think that each has its part, and that it takes all to give the general effect.

If thou lovest this, thou canst not but admire the thundering voices that shook the walls of St. Marcel—for the songs and shrieks of females, the oaths of some, the shouts of others, blended into one sound.

These worthy seamen of the Salamander were not only musicians, they were painters, too—painters by nature. In the middle of a large room, which was half lighted up by two lamps, was a long table, covered with broken glasses, bottles, and plates, and dyed with the hue of the grape. Round the table were a body of seamen, grotesquely dressed, who were drinking, singing, laughing, and shouting. Then at a distance, and forming a strange contrast with the sailors' brown and purple visages, were a group of poor young girls, pale and trembling, who had been dragged there by their evil destiny.

"Ah! this is life," shouted one, as he knocked off the neck of a bottle.

"Oh!" cried another, taking hold of a lovely young girl by the waist; "Oh! Therese, I love you; I adore you. I say so before every one without fear of exposing you; for we are not priests."

"Ah! Parisian," said Geromin, "there's no such life as this in Paris. Of the twenty-three thousand francs that we had yesterday, when this barracks is burnt, we shall not have a sous left." Here he laughed, and knocked upon the table with an air of satisfaction impossible to describe.

"And no one dare say a word to us," added another.

"The firebrands of the Salamander will break bottles and kiss every girl they can lay their hands upon, and, when they have done all this, they will bring about the last day, by making a bonfire of the place. The people will say that the firebrands of the Salamander have amused themselves strangely—that they are a droll set of devils."

"And all without remorse," said the Parisian. "We have a family; we have satisfied nature. Half of our pay to nature—the other half for folly. You see, Geromin, we are giving ourselves up to amusement."

"I believe you; but what have we for the dessert?"

"An excellent idea. We shall have a game at pile by throwing the women out of the window."

"No, Parisian; no, by God!"

"Dam'me, yes; it will create a fight among us; there's a dessert for you."

"Look there, Parisian; two more under the table. Let us smoke the devils. Come; what say you, Parisian?"

"Excellent, excellent; let us smoke those who are drunk; it will preserve them for their friends. What say you, my firebrands?"

"Yes, yes;" shouted all who could stand on their legs; "let us smoke them."

The tables were removed; those who were dead-drunk were piled one above another; straw hats, women's shawls, the bottoms of chairs, and everything that would burn were heaped

over them. Then the cry, "Smoke them, smoke them," mingled with the groans of those who were underneath, and with the half-hoarse laugh of those on the top.

"And when they awake they will be surprised to find that they have come through a fiery ordeal. Ah! ah!"

A brawny arm was stretched out, the lamp was seized, and the wick was within a few feet of the combustible articles, when shouts were heard from without, accompanied by a noise like thunder at the door. The lamp fell from the hand of the Parisian, who, followed by Geromin, ran to the window.

"We're done for, by God!" said the Parisian.

"Pshaw!" said Geromin; "it is the dessert that we've been waiting for so long."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FESTIVAL.

The light of innumerable torches shed their purple glare upon the strange-looking assailants of the inn of St. Marcel. This singular assemblage suddenly became calm, and formed itself into a circle round the tavern. Some were dressed as devils, others as satyrs; some as gods, others as goddesses—their painted faces adding to the fierce lustre of their eyes.

A tall athletic being came out of the circle. He was dressed as the Queen of Sheba, in that ignoble farce which forms one of the most imposing ceremonies of the people of Provence; in which are also seen Herod, with his mitre of gold paper, Pluto and Christ, Proserpine and the Virgin Mary, and myriads of angels, devils, and demons, armed with prongs, pitchforks, and clubs. On these occasions the various actors in these solemnities resort to public houses in the evening. This religious ceremony began, I think, with James I, Count of Provence, and continues up to the present time; and, strange to say, the municipal authorities aid in these hideous ceremonies.

The face of the Queen of Sheba was painted, his black hair and moustaches powdered, a diadem of gilded paper crowned his head, and a white gown, bedaubed with mud, exposed his broad shoulders and brawny arms.

Wielding a massive weapon of sculptured oak, which served as a sceptre, the Queen of Sheba shouted, in a stentorian voice that would have done credit to a chorister—"My pigeons, here's a body of Bonapartists who have dared to profane the holy day of St. James, and who have beaten and robbed our

brave countryman, Father Marius. These dogs of Frenchmen—these scoundrels—have chased him away from his house, but happily he fell in with friends who will revenge his wrongs. Shall we not, my pigeons?"

"Yes, yes; vengeance! Down with the Bonapartists! Let us kill the dogs!"

"The scoundrels have barred the door," vociferated the Queen, as he struck it with his huge weapon. "Open the door. Father Marius calls for revenge."

"Yes," shouted the assemblage; "death to the Bonapartists!"

"They were driven out of Toulon—let us drive them away from here."

"Kill, kill as at Nismes," shouted the Queen of Sheba, shaking the door with violence.

At this moment a window was opened, and Geromin appeared, holding, by way of a speaking-trumpet, the neck of a bottle to his mouth.

"Ahoy!" he cried, "cursed gobblers of oil—what do you want here?"

"The Queen stepped backwards, looked up at Geromin, and said—"Cursed Bonapartists, you have driven an old man from his home, and you make a festive day of one destined for a religious fête. Do you hear that? Now if you do not open immediately, we will take as much blood from you as you have taken wine from Father Marius. Answer, Jacobite."

"I tell you what I shall do with you, cursed oil eater. I shall make a sail of that gown of yours, a mast of your arms, yards of your legs; and for your body, I shall throw it into the water, with six inches of cold steel in its stomach."

"Kill the dog," shouted a hundred voices.

"Stop a little—I forgot," added Geromin, "and when I have made a boat of you, I will put your head in front, and baptise you, ugly b—." Here Geromin put his thumb to his nose, wagged his little finger, and shut the window.

"Thunder and lightning," vociferated the Queen, "let us break open the door, my pigeons. Down with the Bonapartists."

"Yes, yes; death to them," shouted a hundred voices.

A tremendous rush was made at the door; as one of the hinges gave way, a huge massive table, thrown over the balcony, fell on the heads of the assailants. The Queen of Sheba fortunately escaped, but five or six demons or satyrs were crushed beneath the weight; King Herod had his arm dislocated, and the Virgin Mary received a fearful contusion in her left thigh.

This incident redoubled the fury of the Provençals, but calmed, however, their ardour. They withdrew out of the reach of projectiles of that nature to hold a consultation; which was inter-

rupted by Geromin, who reappeared at the window with his well-chosen trumpet in his mouth.

"Ohoy! my oil gobblers, will you give us back our table? We have still bottles to empty, and a few of your bones to break."

"Down with the dog; death to him," shouted a number of voices.

"Leave him a little, my pigeons," cried the Queen of Sheba; "Julian, and Jane Marie will be here soon."

"You will kill no one," shouted Geromin. "Ah! do you think that firebrands will allow themselves to be killed like rats?"

A gun shot interrupted Geromin, who disappeared from the window, exclaiming, "Ah! how cowardly."

"Bravo! bravo!" shouted the assailants, "let such be the death of all Bonapartists and Frenchmen."

"My pigeons," said the Queen of Sheba, "instead of breaking open the door, let us barricade it. We shall get upon the terrace, where there is a window that looks into the large room; we can then pepper them at our ease."

The table was put before the door; huge stones were placed upon it, thereby rendering the means of flight impossible to the unfortunate seamen.

The aspect of the large room was greatly changed. No cries were heard; no drinking; no joy. The firebrands had assembled round poor Geromin, who had been shot in the neck, and was fast expiring. The Parisian, on his knees, was holding the dying man's head, and the others, pale and motionless, were fixing their confused looks upon him.

"My good fellows," said Geromin, in a feeble and hissing voice, "it is vexing; having escaped so often both fire and sword to be killed like a mad dog. Where is the Parisian?"

"Here I am, my old, my poor Geromin."

"Oh, everything is green before my eyes, and I no longer know you; I am done for, Parisian."

"I hope not."

"Yes, yes; but listen; promise me one thing."

"It will be done, whatever it may be, my old comrade."

"Well, Parisian, marry my wife; she has no claim to a pension; she will die of hunger after my death; and my poor little daughter—ah, that idea vexes me. Will you do so, Parisian? Will you be a father to my child?"

"Yes, Geromin; your daughter shall have a father," said the Parisian, wiping his eye.

"Now embrace me," said Geromin, with a feeble voice; "and you, my brave firebrands, give me each your hand. I am sorry that I cannot say adieu to the lieutenant and M. Paul before cutting my lucky. but you will do so for me, for you will see them, if these dogs leave you tongues and eyes." Here his voice became more feeble. The sailors came round him when Gero-

min added, "Adieu, my brave firebrands. Our time is up. The English have got the better of us; I am just as glad, for I will see if the rigging of the ships aloft is the same as our's below. Adieu, my firebrands. Throw me into the water with a thirty-six pounder in my fist; that's the grave of a sailor. Adieu, adieu, Parisian. Love my little daughter a little, and do not beat my wife too much—so—so—long live the Emperor."

These were the last words of Geromin.

"Ah! dogs of Bonapartists!" shouted the Queen, "long live the Emperor! Eh! Here are some of his pills, which he sends you for the good of your health."

Three shots were fired; a second ball entered the head of Geromin; the Parisian had his arm grazed; and Bernard, the gunner, his shoulder fractured.

"These hounds are going to kill us like rats. Let us leave this room; keep close to each other, and revenge the death of Geromin. Grapple with the cut-throats; if you have not your knives take those that are on the table." Saying this, the Parisian ran to the door, brandishing an enormous knife, with which he had armed himself.

Destruction! The door was fastened, and they heard their assailants demolish part of the wall so that they might fire upon them in all directions, and terminate the affair without losing any blood on their own side. Fortunately, however, they had exhausted their ammunition.

"My pigeons," shouted the Queen of Sheba, "let us open the door, and exterminate the scoundrels. Our knives are sharp; we shall see if the blackguards have butter or blood in their veins."

"Then," shouted the firebrands, "we shall be well matched, although you are two to one."

"You wish blood, and you shall have it," said the Parisian, gnashing his teeth, and rolling a handkerchief round the handle of his knife that he might get a firmer hold of it.

"Here's at you, my worthy cook with the long knife," said the Queen to the Parisian.

"Come, then, fair dame, that I may give you a necklace of French steel," vociferated the Parisian, as he ran towards the gigantic dame. The other combatants rushed at each other, and the strife became bloody and furious.

CHAPTER XV.

THE COMBAT.

For some time not a cry was heard. The blood covered the floor; still all was silent, except the noise of feet, the groans of the dying, or the clashing of two blades that met on the same bosom; for it was dark—one lamp alone affording light.

The bodies of the wounded began to incommode the combatants. Some tumbled over the bleeding heaps, while others stood upon them, and getting an advantage over their opponents, shouted, with flaming eyes—"Thou art mine, hell-hound. This keen blade is ready for another Frenchman."

"My blade is broken, but the handle will make you swallow your teeth. Ah! do you feel it? I think so, for it is fixed in your mouth as if it were in a vice—keep it; I shall take your dagger in exchange. Heavens! the handle is wet; it is blood; yes, blood!"

And from the window they saw, by the light of the moon, orange trees covered with flower, and a fresh rivulet that rippled in gleams of silver through green meadows; then the screech of the wild bird fell upon their ears.

"Ah, I see you at last, fair Queen," cried the Parisian. "I have been in search of you for the last half-hour, to revenge the death of poor Geromin, and to give you the steel necklace that I promised you."

"You are jealous of my favours, pigeon," shouted the Queen, grinning like a hyena.

"Yes, I wish to touch your heart," cried the Parisian.

"Come then, my pigeon, that I may embrace you."

They grasped each other, their faces met, and they remained so a second. Taken by surprise, and suffering from pain, the Provençal, giving a sudden shriek, drew back his arms. It was one of the dying who devoured his leg. The Parisian raised his huge knife, then sheathed it to the handle in the bosom of his antagonist.

"At last, my noble Queen," said the Parisian, "I have touched your heart."

"You have, thunder and lightning; but allow me to give you a last love kiss."

Hereupon the Provençal, with the convulsive rage of the dying, threw himself upon the Parisian, bit his lip and cheek with such violence, that his teeth, piercing them, rattled against those of the sailor—the two combatants then fell to the ground.

"The Parisian is dead," cried a firebrand.

"Let us avenge his death," shouted a number of voices, which

was interrupted by the cry of, "Let us revenge the death of our Queen."

The fight now became fierce and bloody.

The Provençals, superior in number, and protected by the clothes and tunics in which they were disguised, exhausted the remaining strength of the sailors, who had previously been all but overcome by wine.

But the voice of the Parisian, who had succeeded in getting away from the Queen by leaving the half of his lip, gave fresh vigour to the sailors. "Courage, courage," he shouted, covered with blood, "if we leave our skins here, let us at least take off theirs;" and, leaping upon Proserpine, he added, "I am gallant this evening—what mistresses!"

The sailors fought with blood-thirsty despair, and the Provençals with the certitude of victory which their numbers insured.

It was a frightful slaughter-house. There was indeed red, as the Queen of Sheba had foretold.

Then from the window they saw, by the soft light of the moon, a smiling country, orange trees in full flower, and a fresh streamlet, that rippled in diamond undulations through a green meadow, and the screech of the wild bird fell upon their ears.

But at that instant that screech was accompanied by another sound, which was sharp and piercing, that reverberated in the silence of the night. It approached nearer and nearer, and became more lively and more expressive. That sound cheered the hearts of the sailors, for it was well known on board the Salamander. The footsteps of men were heard, and a number of seamen, commanded by Paul, rushed into the inn, shouting, "Courage, my boys; forward, my brave firebrands."

CHAPTER XVI.

FORWARD, MY FIREBRANDS.

"Forward, my brave firebrands, forward!"

These were the words that the new comers shouted out when precipitating themselves into the midst of that bloody affray. This unexpected reinforcement, La Joie's whistle, and the sound of Paul's voice, gave such energy and power to the sailors that fortune turned in their favour, and a decisive victory rested with the crew of the Salamander.

The seamen, being as usual furnished with a quantity of cords

and ropes, secured the surviving Provençals, then descended into the lower room, where the women, who had nearly all fainted, and the intoxicated sailors, who had slept soundly during the whole of the affray, had been taken for safety. The sailors, on being disturbed, began to complain bitterly of being too soon roused from their slumbers.

"It's damned annoying," said one. "Can you not amuse yourselves without shaking the whole place, as you were doing aloft a few moments ago."

"That's true; amuse yourselves, and be d—d, but let us sleep in quietness."

"And do not fire any more guns, or let off your crackers," said a third, extending his arm, and placing his head upon it to finish his sleep.

"La Joie," said Paul, "they must be carried to the boats. Then," addressing the new comers, he added, "you must form a body guard, for I am afraid that we shall have the half of the town about our ears."

They raised poor Geromin, also eleven sailors who were dangerously wounded. When the little convoy was ready to set out, Paul, after having carefully searched the inn so that none of his firebrands might be left behind, gave the signal of departure.

"Monsieur Paul," said the Parisian, "I have forgotten one thing—to set the tavern on fire."

"Away, then, quick! for the sun is up, and the officers will be uneasy on board."

The Parisian had scarcely left two minutes before he reappeared, saying, "Faith! they havn't got our money for nothing. No; no; a bargain's a bargain."

"March!" shouted Paul, and the whistle of La Joie rent the air.

When they reached the port, the wounded were put in one boat, and those who were drunk into another.

The breeze of the morning falling fresh upon the hot foreheads of the intoxicated sailors, awoke many of them, who, in their gaiety, sang, shouted, and laughed. The reiterated whistle of La Joie was heard, but to no purpose. The fellows had not the least idea of what had taken place; and their shouts of joy contrasted strangely with the groans of the wounded in the other boat.

Let us explain how Paul so fortunately arrived to assist his firebrands. Having left the Salamander, he went, as he had done before, to the abode of Alice, near which he had remained till sunset. On his way back he met the twenty sailors that were sent to join the corvette at St. Tropez, and on arriving at the little bay, he was surprised to see, at that late hour, the boats of the Salamander, with no one in charge of them. He began

to harbour suspicions of what had occurred, when suddenly he saw something appear above the water, which gradually neared the shore. It was a human head—it was La Joie, whom the lieutenant, having waited all day in impatience, had sent on shore to ascertain the fate of his crew.

La Joie told all to Paul, who, knowing the difference of opinion and the hatred that existed between the people of Provence and the sailors, shuddered at the recital of the desertion. He immediately put himself at the head of the new comers, and, followed by La Joie—who, thanks to his having brought part of his clothing upon his head, dressed himself—hunted up every tavern in St. Tropez, without finding the firebrands.

At last, La Joie, remembering that Bouquin always preferred the St. Marcel inn, at once thought that it had been chosen on account of its retired situation.

It is then known how *à propos* Paul arrived to prevent the complete massacre of the firebrands.

It would have been a sad thing for a crew, such as that of the Salamander, to have been massacred. Men who had the same feelings, the same inclinations. If they must drink, they drank; if they must fight, they fought and killed—without regretting the fatality which often changes a day of pleasure into one of bloodshed and slaughter. They would have been surprised—that was all; and they would have said to one another—“Who would have thought that yesterday?”

And if that crew had perished, what would have become of the Salamander?—for that crew was her life, her very blood.

It is the blood that animates the body—and it was the crew that animated the Salamander: that gave her an air of joy—that gave her existence. So she shuddered and trembled, went and came, had a voice, breathed from every port-hole, and was surrounded by that inexplicable noise which comes from all living creatures. Was it an echo of thought, or animation? I do not know; but the noise indicated that she existed—and without that noise the Salamander would not have done so.

Look at what she had been in the absence of her crew—sad and mournful—silent as the sleep of death. But, now that the crew had returned, she assumed another aspect; she was no longer sad, no longer cold and morose, like a woman without a lover. She was proud and happy, smiling and joyful, in the midst of the flapping of her sails, and the shouts of her sailors.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE RETURN.

The first and second lieutenant, the purser, and the doctor were pacing the deck when the ship's boats appeared in sight.

"I am astonished," said Pierre, "that old La Joie has succeeded so soon. Here are the boats filled with the crew."

"What the devil did you expect?" said the doctor. "Wine and women are the comforts that sailors find on land. The lads will be in a pretty state—"

"I hope, lieutenant," interrupted the purser, "that you will make a severe example of them."

"I know my duty, sir," replied Pierre, sternly.

"Hold your tongue, purser," said old Garnier. "Do you know what a sailor is? Do you think that these poor devils, after two years' cruise, have done much mischief in taking one day to enjoy themselves on land? I would give you six months imprisonment for having so soon complained of a seaman's life, and then we would see—"

"Hang me, lieutenant," interrupted Merval, "if the boats are not filled with blood—the dead and dying."

"Say rather with wine and the drunken," said Garnier.

"No; by heavens! Merval is right," said the lieutenant. "I was sure that a skirmish would ensue. Curses on it. My poor firebrands; and Paul, my son—"

"Paul is safe, lieutenant; he is steering the shallop."

"The mischief!" said the doctor, going to his room. "I must to my closet. There's been blood spilling, and no mistake, but that won't matter much."

"You see, Merval," said Pierre, "how painful it is to chastise these brave and worthy seamen for taking a day to themselves, after undergoing so many privations."

"Pshaw!" said Merval; "you treat your sailors too mildly. The English—"

"The English," interrupted Pierre, "have not French blood in their veins. It is the cat-o'-nine tails that forces them to their guns; and fighting between two perils, sir, or excited by rum or wine, creates an unenviable courage. I have only used the cat nine times in nine years, sir, and I have seen my firebrands at their guns, and I know well what they can do there—"

"Each his opinion, lieutenant. Here are the men."

The boats reached the side of the vessel, and the sailors, ashamed and confused, leapt through the port-holes, so that the wounded and the body of poor Geromin alone appeared on deck. La Joie, however, was sent to order up the sailors, who appeared before Pierre with their heads bent downwards.

Pierre stood upon the quarter-deck, and said, with a severe tone, "Each man who leaves the vessel without permission will be placed in irons for eight days. If the men leave under the appearance of desertion, the leaders will receive twenty lashes. The crew of the Salamander stands accused of desertion, therefore name the principals."

The worthy officer knew well that he would receive no reply.

"Since you refuse to name the ringleaders, the punishment is twelve hours a day for a month. Break the ranks! march! Master-at-arms, look to your prisoners!"

All this was known to the crew. Not a word was heard—not a murmur. Indeed, Pierre appeared to be more grieved than any of them.

"Brave lads," said he, on seeing them descending with so much indifference, "for one day of pleasure—and what sort of pleasure!—they again begin two or three years of a hard life, without a complaint. Poor fellows. But let us look to the wounded."

He then joined the doctor, who was cursing and swearing on his way to the battery, where the wounded had been conveyed.

"Why do you not, asses that you are," said the doctor to his patients, "take your sabres with you when you go on land, and not allow yourselves to be hacked by these cursed peasants."

"But, doctor," said one, "we had our knives with us."

"Your knives—your knives; damned asses, dolts, to meet those dogs of Provence with knives. Look here: do you see that gash. Could your nails rip up flesh in that manner. I tell you that you are brutes, asses, animals. Now, pay attention to what I am about to say. If I discover by your wounds that any of you felt pain during the night, without sending for me; if I discover that any of you—do you hear, asses?"

"Yes, doctor."

"Well; if any of you should suffer from your wounds when bearing the irons, I swear—for it is not the first time that you have done so, wretches that you are—"

"But, doctor—"

"I will have nothing to do with your *but, doctor*. Do you think that you are here," said the worthy old fellow, exasperated, "do you think that you are here to suffer the torments of the damned. Do you think that people like you, fools that you are, do not deserve every possible solicitude? Is not my life devoted to you, miserable wretches?"

"Yes, doctor; yes," said all, with fear, for Garnier expressed his philanthropy in the most furious manner, "yes; we know that you are our good old doctor, and that you take care of us."

"What! I would box my own ears if I did not. Come, my lads, now that I have said all, be of good courage. Be quiet,

and remember, if you suffer when you bear the irons, you must then tell me."

"Yes, doctor."

The worthy old fellow then joined the lieutenant, who was holding a letter in his hand.

"Well, Garnier," said Pierre, "our captain, the Marquis of Longetour, will be here to-morrow."

"Monsieur Longetour."

"Yes, the Marquis of Longetour. The name does not please me much."

"Nor does it please me lieutenant. It matters not. I must go back to my patients. I forgot to tell them something."

CHAPTER XVIII.

COQUETRY.

Heavens! how splendidly equipped! what grace! what elegance! Yes, we can easily perceive, my pretty Salamander, that thou expectest thy new officer. How white and clean is thy deck, how nicely thy sails are unfurled, and how bright thy guns. Wherefore, I ask thee, so much preparation? Is it to receive the worthy Marquis of Longetour, who, for thee, has abandoned his happy counter, his ambitious wife, his coffee, and his cheering cigar.

Alas, alas! I am fearful, libertine that thou art, that this good man will lead a sad life with thee. He is so mild—thou art so haughty; he is so indolent—thou art so intrepid; he is so chaste, so timid—and thou art so impertinent.

Alas, alas! I am afraid that an incompatibility of temper will exist between thee and him; and that thou wilt oblige him to demand a separation, for thou wouldst not part with thy brave and proud lover, Pierre. Then, poor, poor Marquis!

And if he fall in love with thee (for thou hast made thyself gay to-day) thou wilt not return his love; and still, coquette, thou wouldst like to seduce him.

To the point. Never did the Salamander appear to better advantage. All her firebrands and the fresh sailors brought by Paul, were neatly attired in white trousers, blue vests, with anchors on the buttons; red belts, that contrasted with the whiteness of their blue-bordered shirts, with turned-over collars, which left exposed to view their brown and vigorous necks; a low-crowned hat, with broad brims, completing their uniform.

The most profound silence reigned on board, for it was nine o'clock, and half-past nine was the time appointed.

Pierre and the other officers, clothed in naval uniform, wore instead of swords, poniards hanging from their necks by silk ribbons.

"Do you not see anything, quarter-master," demanded the lieutenant.

"Yes, lieutenant; there is a long boat doubling the point, which bears our flag."

"We shall soon know our commander," said Pierre, taking the glass. "Yes, it is he. M. Merval, let each man be at his post to receive the captain."

This order was immediately executed.

"Is he fat or lean, lieutenant," demanded the doctor.

"My faith, it would be a difficult job to tell at this distance; however, you can try for yourself, doctor."

"He appears to me very lanky," said the doctor, "which is ominous to table delights."

"Come, come, gentlemen, to your posts," said the lieutenant, "the boat is at hand, and will be instantly alongside."

Such, indeed, was the case, for, pulled by twelve vigorous seamen, it swept along the water, described a circle before the vessel, then, losing its impetus by the men shifting their oars, it glided softly, and stopped with admirable exactitude under the starboard ladder.

At that moment Pierre appeared on the quarter deck. The whistle of La Joie, and the beating of the drum, caused the worthy ex-tobacconist to take off his hat three times; when the rope-ladder, however, met his view, he could not conceal his embarrassment.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE INSPECTION.

M. Forman, Marquis of Longetour, had, during his humble occupation behind the counter, neglected his naval gymnastics, and to mount a ladder, on which he could only place the tip of his toe, appeared to him somewhat difficult. However, assisted by two cords placed on each side, he began his perilous ascent. When he was half-way up, he missed his footing, and would decidedly have made a hole in the water had he not had presence of mind to hold on by the ropes; by which he remained suspended, wheeling and turning in the air.

A sailor leapt forward, respectfully placed his

ladder, and, therefore, thanks to that unlooked-for assistance, the Marquis reached the deck in safety.

"What manœuvre is he going through?" said old Garnier. "Is he trying the strength of our ropes?"

"How do you do, gentlemen? Your ladder is not very convenient."

Such were the first words that the ex-tobacconist said to the officers who were assembled on the deck of the Salamander.

M. Longetour was dressed in a superb new uniform; his hat was new, his sword was new, and so were his epaulettes. Oh, yes! everything was new; and he looked well, this Monsieur Forman, Marquis of Longetour, in his handsome uniform.

"No, my faith," he repeated, saluting the officers; "your stairs are not very convenient."

"We are grieved, commandant," replied Pierre, "that we had no others to offer you; but allow me to introduce you to our esteemed— My God; commandant; take care, you will fall down the hatchway!"

M. Longetour, in drawing back a few steps to add an air of grace to his salutation, had approached the hatchway, and would have disappeared in the midst of the discourse, had it not been for the friendly warning of Pierre.

"Commandant," said Pierre, "if you will descend to your room, I will take the honour of calling over the names of your officers."

The commandant was so confused at what had taken place, that, instead of going abaft, he directed his steps towards the forecastle, followed by the worthy doctor, who could not comprehend the meaning of this manœuvre.

"He is," said the latter, with a smile, "a good-humoured devil. To examine our cooking apparatus first is not a bad sign."

At last the ex-tobacconist, recollecting where the rooms were, advanced towards them. His scouring the whole of the vessel might, in the eyes of the crew, have passed for an inspection of deck arrangements.

The worthy Marquis entered his cabin, and appearing surprised at the luxury that prevailed, said—"Ah! how neat; how very neat everything is. Well, lieutenant, you may introduce me to your officers."

"M. de Merval, sir, second lieutenant."

"M. de Merval, second lieutenant," said the Marquis. "Ah; I understand; but we used to have another name for that officer, and, as far as my recollection goes, he wore a blue surtout and vest bordered with lace. I am delighted to make your acquaintance, M. Merval."

Pierre and the doctor glanced at each other in surprise; the former continued his nomenclature.

"M. Paul Huet, midshipman."

"Your name, lieutenant, is also Huet?"

"Yes, commander; he is my son."

"I see. He is a fine young fellow. We had another name than that of midshipman in my time. He does his duty well; I daresay he does." Then tapping Paul under the chin, he added, "And is your father pleased with you, eh? Does he ever scold you?"

Paul blushed, and when saluting the Marquis, he could scarcely refrain from laughing.

Pierre continued—"M. Garnier, surgeon of the Salamander."

"Ah, doctor, I am happy to see you. I hope we shall always be friends, and live in friendship together; but that's all, for I have an infernal antipathy to drugs and lancets."

"Yet, commander, a few minutes ago, when you were dangling in the air, I thought I should have to begin my acquaintanceship in a professional point of view."

This was said in spite of the severe looks of the lieutenant, who did not know to what length Garnier's freedom of speech might lead him.

"I daresay, doctor," replied the commandant, "I cut rather an awkward figure."

"You did, indeed, commandant; and my sides still ache from laughing."

Pierre's face became crimson, and he bit his lips with rage.

"So much the better; I like people to amuse themselves," said the commander.

The doctor was about to reply, when the lieutenant, to put a stop to the conversation, presented the purser.

"M. Gabillot, the purser."

"Ah! the purser. I almost forget, but I think, in former times they were dressed in grey coats, with grain-coloured velvet collars."

"It is too much, commandant," said the purser, "for you to remember details; and, on this occasion, I will take the opportunity of expressing my devotedness to the reigning family that Providence has given us—that Providence—"

"Hold your tongue, purser," whispered the doctor. "The commandant speaks of grain, and you sing out Providence. It's goosish, man."

The ex-tobacconist replied—"No one, gentlemen, respects that family more than I do, for to it I owe the pleasure of this meeting, which, I assure you, delights me. You appear to me to be good fellows, and I am disposed to love you for being so, and to cherish you as my children. We shall help each other; I will love you all, for which you will lend me your counsel, for I shall often require it. Then, my friends, let me finish by a few words, which ought to find a response in all our hearts—'Long live the king!'"

The purser shouted "Long live the king!" with such vehemence, that the doctor started back in fury, and the eyes of the lieutenant kindled with rage.

"Now, my friends," said the commander, rising, "I should like to say a few words to those brave fellows above."

Followed by his officers, he appeared on deck. The whistle of *La Joie* was heard, and all waited in silence for the Marquis' speech.

"My brave friends," said the captain, "the king sends me to command you, and I shall do everything to merit that high office. I think we—" (here the commandant looked at his officers) "understand each other."

Pierre fixed his eyes upon the Marquis, and coughed loudly.

The Marquis, however, continued—"Indeed, you shall all be my children."

"They, also," said Garnier, whisperingly. "Egad! he is worse than a gull with her young ones."

"My friends," continued the ex-tobacconist, "you will find that your old commander will hurt no one; that he will do everything for you all; that he will support you through good or evil report; that—" Here the worthy man wiped away a tear that had stolen to his eye. Pierre then stepped forward, and whispered in his ear—"Enough, commander, enough; allow me to finish."

The sailors, little accustomed to the sight of tears, began to laugh and murmur, when the voice of Pierre commanded silence. "Sailors," he said, "the commander has authorised me to add that, in his desire to render you happy, he wishes that the most severe discipline be maintained on board; he wishes you to understand that offences will be as severely punished as formerly; that you will find him rigorous and inflexible if you do not show yourselves worthy of your old reputation. Break up the ranks. March! Let the offenders be again placed in irons."

The countenances of the sailors assumed their ordinary expression of carelessness and resignation, and they descended quietly to their irons.

"Notwithstanding the old fellow's kind words and good-natured looks," said one, "he is a tartar, depend upon it. Did you not hear what he told the lieutenant? Ah, the old sea-wolf. We must take care and keep ourselves clear of his tusks."

"My dear lieutenant," said the commander. "Come below with me. I wish to tell you something in private."

"I have something to say to you, also," said Pierre.

"Come along, then, my good lieutenant; come along."

CHAPTER XX.

THE DISCOVERY.

"First, then, my dear lieutenant," said the Marquis, "you must excuse my taking off this devil of a uniform for it suffocates me."

"Certainly, commander."

"Ah, now I feel something like freedom. For you must know, my friend, that I have been so long a good and humble citizen, that I have lost the habit of wearing these cursed appendages."

"Then you have not been at sea for some time."

"I should say not, my friend. But I must be open with you, and tell you all. Listen. In 1790 I emigrated to America, where I remained till 1805, at which period I supplicated Napoleon to give me a lieutenantcy in the navy, an office I had filled before the Revolution. I received an immediate refusal, stating—what was very true—that I would require to be rubbed up a little, as Vienna could not pass for a sea-port. One of my relations, however, the Duke of St. Arc, Bonaparte's chamberlain, secured for me, by way of compensation, the business of a tobacconist."

"A tobacconist! How, sir; do come from a snuff-shop?"

"Yes, my dear sir; and happy and contented I was. My new occupation delighted me. In obscurity and quietness, I forgot the title and fortune which I once possessed, and no longer fostering hopes that would never be realised, I lived happily up to the restoration. Then came the law which took cognizance of the services of emigrant officers, whether they had served before the emigration, or before the usurpation. It would have been the same to me; but I have a devil of a wife, lieutenant—an incarnate demon," he added, in a low tone, as if he was afraid that Elizabeth might hear. "Well, she took it into her head to write to my cousin, the Duke of St. Arc. Strange! By chance I had in my possession some family papers that were of importance to him, and what did my cursed wife do but send them, at the same time, requesting him to change my present position. In gratitude he spared neither time nor trouble, and succeeded in obtaining for me this office, which is higher than the one I filled before the Revolution. You know, my good friend, that I refused it."

"Well, then, commandant."

"Well, my friend, my enraged wife tormented me so much that I was obliged to accept it. In spite of my protestations, she answered the letter, and would actually have brought me

on board this vessel, had not God in his goodness afflicted her with a pleurisy, which forced her to remain at Paris."

"Ah, sir, take care, take care. I warn you that you are in a very dangerous position; for I could easily discover that you are not fit for the appointment conferred upon you—that you, indeed, have forgotten everything."

"Everything, my dear friend, everything."

"Astronomy."

"How, in the devil's name, could I have learnt that? for I was young when I left the navy, and you know the pleasures of youth, lieutenant. Do you imagine, then, that I could study in my shop?"

"It is still time to refuse. You are risking your life and the lives of a brave crew. Refuse, I beseech you."

"Refuse, refuse; it is easy to say so; but my wife."

"Your wife, sir, as far as I can judge, is better able to wear the epaulettes than you."

"Between you and me, my friend, that is very true; and, consequently, I cannot refuse without her consent, which she will never give me."

"In accepting the command, what do you purpose doing?"

"Faith, my dear sir, I have two things to choose from—to pretend to know everything, or to avow my ignorance. In choosing the first I could not sustain my character more than eight days; in adopting the second, I run the risk of meeting a gallant man such as you (here the Marquis took hold of Pierre's hand), to whom I would tell how matters stood, and whose advice I would ask; then in his generosity I would put my trust."

The lieutenant, whose rage subsided at this candidness, in conjunction with the look of the poor old Marquis, who seemed so humble, so repentant, and embarrassed, said, "Your confidence, sir, will not be misplaced; it is fortunate you have made this avowal. I must, however, inform you that it is not to you, whom I scarcely know, that I will devote myself. No! it is to maintain the honour of the epaulettes that you wear, which to me, sir, represent a service that should always remain spotless. It is a failing—I know it; but as long as Pierre Huet lives, his care, his hope, aye, his life, will be sacrificed, rather than have a stigma cast upon the honour of our marine—rather than that one of her officers who wore a commander's epaulettes should be disrespected; for, sir, were that the case, there would be no discipline, no subordination. It is on that account, then, that I shall do all in my power to maintain your honour as a commander; but remember, sir, you enter, with a light heart, upon a perilous undertaking."

"Well, lieutenant, what can I do? The mischief is already done."

"Unfortunately, the evil is irreparable. You are of noble blood, and are protected by the ministry. If I were to write, telling the true state of things, I should be treated as a Bonapartist, and expelled from the navy; still I should like to watch over the safety of my old Salamander, and my poor firebrands. We must make the best of a bad job. But, for heaven's sake, never speak of tactics, nor never contradict my orders; and at any time when you are embarrassed, pretend to whisper something to me, and I will then, apparently, execute your orders."

"Very well, lieutenant," said the other, in submission.

"Now, to begin; you will sign an order of the day, which I will write, testifying your satisfaction with the crew."

"Very well, lieutenant."

"Then you will pardon the sailors now in chains."

"Very good, lieutenant."

"And, according to custom, you will order that a double ration of wine be given to the crew."

"Yes, lieutenant."

"When at sea, in stormy weather, mount upon the poop, and from time to time call upon me, so that I may have the appearance of giving your orders."

"Very well, lieutenant."

At this moment Garnier appeared. Pierre, respectfully saluting the Marquis of Longetour, said, "You have no more orders, captain?"

"Orders," said the ex-tobacconist. "On the contrary, it is—No, no; I have no more. Stop, stop. We have passengers; amongst them, M. de Szaffie, who is going to Smyrna, and whose commands and inclinations are to be strictly attended to. Then there is a lady, with her niece, who is going to Smyrna to meet M. de Bleine, the father of the young girl, who is a wealthy banker. These three will dine at my table; as to their rooms—"

"I shall look to that, captain," interrupted Pierre.

"Commander," said old Garnier, "I come to beg of you to give me some other place for my lads. The wounded are at present in front of the battery, which is very inconvenient. If you would give your orders on that matter—"

"My old friend," said Pierre, on seeing the Marquis's embarrassment, "I have already spoken to the commander on that subject, and he has told me his wishes in that respect."

"Yes, yes, doctor," said the Marquis, "that matter is settled. You must dine with me to-day, gentlemen."

"We shall be proud of the honour, captain," said Pierre, bowing respectfully to his superior. He then left the room, accompanied by Garnier.

"Well," said the doctor, "our commander seems a good-na-

tured old fellow; but it appears to me that his epaulettes have not been often washed by the sea-wave."

"You are deceived, my old friend; you are deceived; he is a man, I think, who knows his business, but who, he tells me, has been in the habit of getting everything done by his lieutenant, who is only his mouth-piece; which is not at all agreeable, I assure you."

"You are right; but if he's a sailor that's a great deal, since we were afraid that we might have an ass."

"You'll find, my dear doctor, that our apprehensions were ill-founded. But what do I see! a boat, and well loaded, too! Ah! happy doctor. There are lovely invalids for you."

"Indeed! These are our passengers," said Garnier, running to the ladder with the agility of a young man.

Madame and Mademoiselle Bleiné met a naval reception from Pierre, who conducted them to the chamber of the commander.

Let us now explain to our readers the fanaticism, if it be one, that Pierre Huet entertained for, what he termed, the honour of the service. There would be no occasion, however, for such did they know the extent to which that point of honour was carried, and is now carried on in the navy.

The navy exercises the most absolute despotism on board her ships, which demands immediate and instantaneous obedience, for, on land, should an order be delayed a few minutes, no serious injury results therefrom; but at sea, on the contrary, a minute's delay, indeed, the least hesitation, may cause the total destruction of the vessel and all on board.

It will be easily understood, then, that should the least doubt exist as to the capacity of the chief officer—for those under him are only his echoes—the blind confidence which braves all peril will give way, and, instead of the word of command being instantly obeyed, the order would be disputed, insubordination would ensue, and revolt would break up that admirable construction of maritime hierarchy which is based upon courage and knowledge.

Pierre, in devoting himself to the Marquis, did it as much for himself and his comrades, as for the commander. When the captain loses his influence, those immediately under him also lose theirs.

And that influence—is it not the first basis of moral discipline—is it not the powerful means by which a single word governs the fate of five hundred men? On land the soldier never fails to find a footing; he sees where he is conducted; towns, mountains, and forests, serve as guides; but at sea, stars unknown to the sailor, and astronomical observations far above his knowledge, guide the vessel on her way. There is not a question asked about the route. Go—and he goes; stop,

he stops ; risk thy life at the top of the main-topmast—he risks it. Where is he, and where is he going ? He knows not. He has no right to fear breakers, although he is surrounded by them. He passes months and years, and knows neither where the storm bears him, nor where he is when riding in a calm.

Behold the reward that these poor fellows receive for their obedience ! A hard hammock, coarse provisions, bad water, hard labour, and huddled all together in a dark place where they are deprived of light and air ; while the commander has a large commodious room, and lives upon the dainties of the season.

For men to look over such a disparity of existence—to resign themselves to a life of labour—to peril their safety at a word or sign ; must they not, I ask, respect the commander ; must they not have the greatest veneration for his courage and knowledge ; must they not be conscious of their own inferiority, and look upon subordination and discipline as the only sure means of securing their own safety ? Man always acknowledges the superiority of mind over corporeal strength. Sailors feel that they are only the arm that executes, whilst the commander is the head that thinks and conceives. The consciousness of the superiority of the commander creates the most profound submission, whilst a contrary impression would lead to the most fearful results.

This Pierre well understood, for he knew that should the men discover the incapacity of their commander, they would not appoint him to fill his place ; so with his strict views in regard to discipline, and with the knowledge that he possessed of the hearts of the mariners, he knew that his attempt to claim the right of command would necessarily bring ruin upon all ; to attack the military hierarchy is like taking the first pearl from a necklace—all the others fall off and are lost.

I hope this long and unedifying digression will be looked over ; but I think, to give a true idea of the character of Pierre, who is not an overdrawn disciplinarian, for we could cite twenty such men, that it is absolutely necessary.

At the expiration of an hour, Paul returned with the long boat, mounted the deck, became pale and agitated. His eyes had fallen upon Alice on board the Salamander.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PASSENGERS.

It is charming to say—Her heart is mine ; yes, all my own ! for before belonging to me, it had never throbbed ; never had the blush suffused the cheek of that young girl ; never had she shunned the thoughts that started in her mind, or, half-dreaming, forgotten the hours.

Alas ! in truth, these virgin hearts are rarely found, except in the convent, or in the harem. In Paris, for example, the young girl of eighteen—though she be ever so prudent, ever so virtuous, ever so confiding in her mother—has experienced many loves.

According to our habits, females soon begin to love. From three years old to five—the love of the doll, the love of each inmate, the love of night, the love of day. From five to ten, there is the love of the little husband and wife, a love which parents stimulate and encourage, for nothing amuses them more than witnessing, in miniature, scenes of jealousy and of tenderness. Then comes the love at school—the love of the drawing-master, whose white hand glides so majestically over the paper, tracing the most beautiful objects ; the love of the handsome music-master, whose flexible fingers produce the most pleasing melody. At fifteen, there's the love of the young man with auburn hair that lives opposite, who is always at the window in the mornings. Then, from the age of sixteen to eighteen—Oh, what innumerable loves ! In winter, the love at ball ; men, fair, dark, brown, black ; in summer, the handsome foreigner, who called upon papa yesterday, and who will dine with us to-morrow. Loves ! the thought is enough to make one shudder.

These loves may be what is called chaste ; only loving thoughts ; but how prodigiously they alter that freshness of sensation, that delicate and virginal emotion, which, like the down on a flower, is discernible, but not to be seized.

Would you be astonished to find girls, as we have described, who have been always under the maternal eye ; girls chaste, as the world has it, at eighteen, who are tricky and artful, and who will exchange for your sincere passion a false love ; for that which is true and natural has been used from doll days up to those of the ball-room waltz.

Then how great did the heart of Alice contrast with those described—she who had never been at a ball but once, and who had determined never to go again ; she who had been brought up in a convent by a friend of her mother, who had purified and cultured her heart, instead of withering it ; she had only loved her God and her Saviour. Noble and sublime love, from

which springs contemplation, developing inconceivably the young and ardent imagination.

We have already stated that it was with grief that Alice had left the convent, but the idea of a sea-voyage, and the hope of seeing her father, had softened her regret.

When she arrived on board the Salamander, she examined everything with the curiosity of a young girl, and in Paul she found a most attentive and zealous cicerone. Paul was not timid and distant, which is often the result of false education; on the contrary, he was open and confiding in the extreme. Everything that came to his mind he uttered; and as his father had developed in him noble sentiments, all he said evinced the most elevated ideas. The love that he had for Alice, instead of changing the openness of his disposition, had a contrary effect. To him love was a virtue, a sentiment of which he was proud, a word which ought not to be pronounced, but a thing which ought to be proved by respect and devotedness.

Alice regarded Paul without emotion; she liked his society, but was calm; she heard him speak, and it was with pleasure. All this to her was happiness, not delight.

For two days after the arrival of the passengers on board the Salamander, Paul spent all the time when off duty, with Alice and Madame Bleiné, who were highly pleased with him. Paul told them everything; he spoke with that candid assurance which is the happy privilege of a guileless mind. It never occurred to him that he might be troublesome, for in his eye the confidence which he placed in them was a mark of his esteem; and happy would he have been if he could have inspired the same confidence.

So he told them of his hopes, of the battles he had witnessed, and of the voyages he had made, with enchanting simplicity; then, with a tear in his eye, but a smile on his lip, he spoke of his departed mother. The recollections of his father's solicitude changed his poignant grief into mild melancholy.

And Alice wept and smiled too; and Madame Bleiné said, wiping her eyes, "Come, my children, let us speak of something else."

Then Alice related her life—her joys and woes, her regret at leaving the convent, her hope of seeing her father, the incertitude of her future days.

At these words, Paul drew back his head, saying, with a swelling heart, "For my part, I shall be either killed, or will become an admiral. I will be engaged in fearful battles—will receive many wounds, and will gain renown; and all this," he added, blushing, "for my wife."

"She will be very happy, and ought to be very proud of you," said Alice, "you are so good, so noble; and you love your father so much, M. Paul."

THE YOUNG MIDSHIPMAN.

Sometimes the good commandant, the worthy lieutenant, and Garnier joined the little circle, chatted and laughed; the old doctor tormenting the purser, and M. Merval paying his attentions to Alice, which she almost openly slighted.

Everything went on well. Alice was happy; indeed all were so; only each desired the weighing of the anchor; but M. Szaffie had not arrived, and the vessel would not sail without him.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE GREEN PILOT.

On one of those lovely evenings, so often witnessed in Provence, when the heat becomes oppressive, the breeze is hushed, and the sea, calm and glittering like a polished mirror, reflects the ruddy and singular hues of the moon, Master Bouquin was gravely seated on the poop, and at his feet were grouped around him the sailors of the quarter-deck, who were greedily listening to one of those marvellous yarns that often charm away the monotony of a seafaring life. Some were extended on their backs, their hands clasped over their heads, and eyes shut, others were seated close to him, their elbows on their knees, and seemingly lost in the story; then there were those who, not contented with one enjoyment, indulged in the pleasures of the pipe.

After stuffing his cheek with tobacco, and putting his box into his pocket, Bouquin continued the story which, for a few seconds, had been interrupted.

"Well, my lads, the Green Pilot built a vessel, and called her after himself. But what a monster! You may, my lads, form an idea of the sails by knowing the time it took to go up the starboard rigging, and come down aport. Well, my lads, those who went up when they were cabin-boys, came down old men with grey heads. Yes, it took twenty-five years to go up, and twenty-five to come down."

Here the greedy listeners expressed their surprise by a round of oaths and blasphemous expressions. Bouquin smiled, rolled the tobacco that he had lodged in his cheek about his mouth, and continued:—

"Ah, my lads, if you had seen her pursuing her way in the midst of frightful tempests and sheets of lightning that all but set the sea on fire. How she rushed through the waves and lightning with her sails furled! And what sails! Aye, what sails! The Green Pilot had in her topmast a ladder of one hundred vessels; and the pilot could bring the four corners of

the mainsail together as easily as one could tie a handkerchief filled with chesnuts.

"The Green Pilot then pursued the little sloop of silver and gold, which fled and fled, and reeled from the weight of her sails. But pshaw! the Green Pilot advanced rapidly, with her keel scraping against the bottom of the ocean. She advanced, my lads, just as I tell you, till she came within two gun-shots of the little sloop; and what do you think of the little devil? she faced about, my lads, and showed her teeth."

"Ah, how stupid of the little sloop!" cried one of the listeners.

"After all," said another, "if she received a drubbing, she only got what she deserved."

"Ah!" continued Bouquin, after bringing the piece of tobacco into contact with each hole and corner of his mouth, "then the Pilot approached nearer and nearer the little sloop, and was preparing to grapple the little fellow with a hook ten thousand times larger than the anchor of a three-master."

"Holy Father!" cried one.

"Ah, for that; he could fish up the ships of the line as easily as we could pull up a whiting."

"Ah, scoundrel of a Green Pilot," said another.

"Silence!" shouted the auditors.

"Well, my lads, the Green Pilot advanced a little nearer. You must know, also, that her sails were all furled; for it was only an ordinary tempest, at which time the winds could not swell the sheets. Well, suddenly my strange pilot began to veer and veer, and veer sideways, first three, ten, then fifteen points."

The astonishment of the listeners, then at its height, was expressed by open mouth and expressive gestures.

"But here's the fun of the thing," said Bouquin, pleased with the effect that he had produced, "the little silver sloop hoisted flags as a sign of victory. But what is strange, those flags were flames of fire of all colours, which went and came, and were superb to look at. But this is not all, my lads; upon the silver deck of this vessel were gold cannons that were charged with perfume instead of powder, and were manned by lovely girls with just enough of clothes to prevent them blushing. Well, instead of the thundering noise that our thirty-six pounders make, the gold cannons of the little sloop produced a sound full of melody, and the smoke embalmed the air, and came soft and fresh like the breeze that comes from yonder orangery."

"Holy Father!" exclaimed one; "how I should like to be quarter-master of such a crew. I would imprison a couple every night in my hammock for the sake of discipline, and I am sure they would not be dissatisfied with the service. Oh, no!"

"Cursed Pierrot!" shouted the auditors, "can you not hold tongue of yours?"

Then, my lads," said Bouquin, "the Green Pilot continued veer in spite of herself."

"But how could that be, Master Bouquin?"

"You shall know, my lads. I told you that the little sloop was made of silver, and that the cannons, nails, and keel, were of pure gold: there was not a morsel of iron or steel, no, not even a needle on board."

"But what did the tailors do, master Bouquin?"

"Go, animal, were you not told that it was a female crew, who were all but naked?" said Pierrot, who was struck with this singular circumstance.

"Then, my lads," continued Bouquin, who took at each interruption a voyage to his tobacco-box, "the Green Pilot was full of iron, and the girls of the little sloop knew that by the three hundred and six degrees of north latitude there was, my lads, a mountain of pure adamant about six thousand leagues in circumference."

"Ah, master Bouquin," cried one with an incredulous laugh.

"Unbelieving dog, if this is not true, tell me why the compass, which is made of pure steel, turns always towards the north."

A tremendous blow, coupled with this irrefragable argument, closed the mouth of the sceptic, to the great satisfaction of all around.

"Then, my lads, the navigators who were not careful in avoiding the mountain—without all the iron works of the ships were made of gold and silver, which you know would be very expensive to the government—these vessels, when once within two hundred and sixty leagues and a quarter of it, neither more nor less, begin to veer and veer, quicker and quicker, towards the mountain, and when within seven leagues of it, they leap out of the water, like flying fishes, and are fixed like a pin in a cushion, upon that huge mass of loadstone; so as the mountain had no effect upon gold or silver, those ships that were so mounted ran no danger. This accounts for the Green Pilot veering, and for the little silver vessel remaining in the same place—but unfortunately for the little sloop——"

At this moment Master Bouquin, seizing hold of his left thigh, shouted out, "Blood and murder! something's going to take place in the air."

"What, master," said one, "is it the Green Pilot that tells you?"

"No, my lads, it is my barometer—my thigh. Ever since my last wound, I know when a change of weather is going to take place; I can now predict something good in store for us. Come, my lads, to your feet."

"Look at the strange colour of the moon."

Bouquin, without replying, hastened to the commandant, with whom were the purser and passengers.

"My ladies," said Pierre, after looking through one of the windows, "there is no danger, but it will be better for you to retire to your rooms;" then making a sign to the commandant to remain where he was, he added, "Gentlemen, let us go upon deck, to see what's going on; then I shall come to take your orders, commandant."

The ladies followed the purser and doctor, and Pierre and the officers went upon deck. It was time.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TYPHON.

When Pierre reached the deck, the whistle of *La Joie* had assembled the crew.

The heat was oppressive; and deep and long unbroken peals of thunder burst upon the ear. The moon became more and more opaque, and at last disappeared behind a thick vapoury cloud, which was rapidly extending itself over the sky. The long waves rolled heavily upon the beach, disclosing so many vivid lights, that the dark rocks that lined the coast seemed covered with fiery foam.

And the fish came to the surface of the water, dived, and left behind them circles of flame which gradually became larger, then were lost in the ocean.

"Officers, to your posts!" cried Pierre, as a loud peal of thunder broke forth over the corvette, accompanied by a sheet of lightning that seemed to condense itself round the Salamander. In an instant the mast tops, and every little article tipped with iron, were surmounted by a blue light which danced in the darkness.

"Look to the helm, steersman, for we shall soon be enclosed in darkness," and when adding, "light the lanthorns," a tremendous gust of wind swept along the vessel with the rapidity of lightning, heaving one side nearly out of the water.

"The rudder is of no use, commandant," said Pierre, as if addressing his superiord; "own with the masts, *La Joie*—but all."

While *La Joie* was running for a hatchet, Pierre shouted out, "Stop, she is governable. Brave vessel! My noble Salamander!"

Luckily the vessel recovered her equilibrium, for a moment afterwards the typhon fell upon the vessel with tremendous

violence, and seemed to level it with the water. The lightning flashed on all sides, and seemed literally to surround the vessel with sheets of fire, while the creaking of the masts, and the rattling of chains, mingled with the loud roar of the thunder. At this critical period, a long-boat, seen by the lightning's flash, approached the corvette; but it was only discernable for a moment, for this strange phenomenon, after lasting two minutes, disappeared, leaving the harbour in the most profound obscurity.

So great was the surprise of all on board, that not a single word was spoken. At last the silence was broken by the words—"The Salamander, ahoy!"

"Who goes there?" demanded the lieutenant.

"M. Szaffie."

"Look to the larboard, La Joie," shouted the lieutenant, "has the typhon rendered you deaf? Get the ladders ready."

Indeed, La Joie, like the rest of the crew, had been for a few minutes paralysed by that unforeseen event. The voice of the lieutenant had recalled the boatswain to himself, who raised the whistle to his mouth, and, a few seconds afterwards, M. Merval advanced towards the stranger who had come on board. The lieutenant had descended to the commander's cabin, where he found the worthy ex-tobacconist stretched upon the sofa, with his head buried in the cushion, in a state of the most abject fear.

Merval saluted the stranger, who, on returning the salutation, said, "I am the passenger, sir, whom you expected. Can I speak to your commander, and would you be kind enough to see my valet and people on board who are in that shallop?"

"I will give the necessary orders, sir. You have been fortunate to escape the typhon."

"Very fortunate, sir; but be so kind as to take me to your commander."

It was impossible to distinguish the features of M. Szaffie, for his face was muffled up in a large black mantle that was dripping wet.

As soon as the stranger descended, Pierre appeared on deck.

"At last," he said to M. Merval, "our passenger has arrived; if the breeze prove favourable, we shall quit this road to-morrow. But why do you not discharge that shallop?"

"Your son was told to do so, sir," said the second lieutenant, irritated.

"You mean the midshipman," said Pierre, coldly, who, according to his habit and rigour, set aside the ties of relationship, when they interfered with discipline and military hierarchy. "If he has failed in duty, punish him. M. de Merval, you are his superior."

Saying this, the good lieutenant walked away.

Paul had descended to relieve the anxiety of Madame and

Mademoiselle Bleiné, who were greatly excited, and whom old Garnier could not pacify.

At the expiration of a quarter of an hour, the Marquis appeared on deck, saying, "Ah! we can at least breathe here, and I require to do so. We shall set out to-morrow morning, lieutenant; such is the desire of our passenger."

"We may do so, provided he be able to command the wind."

"If the wind permit, my friend, that's understood. Did you see this important passenger?"

"No, commander."

"He is not prolix. He asked me to show him his apartment, to send his valet to him, then saluted me, and retired."

"Did you see his face?"

"Yes; he is pale, bears an arrogant expression of countenance. Indeed, he does not appear to me to be one of those men who come under the appellation of a 'jovial brick.'"

"My faith! commander, it matters little; but one thing, you must devote to me the whole of this evening."

"How! what to do, lieutenant? I feel very sleepy indeed."

"That you may; but you do not sleep till you have learnt by heart the manœuvre of weighing anchor; you can't dispense with it."

"I will say that I am indisposed."

"With old Garnier you could not do so; he would prove to you that you were telling a falsehood."

"But——"

"There must be no *buts*, commander. My post is abaft, and I must be there. Once the anchor is weighed, I will join you."

"Well, lieutenant, you shall have your own way," said the worthy Marquis, who added to himself, "This devil of a lieutenant is, in truth, another Elizabeth."

The sailors lying on the battery said one to another, on seeing, in the middle of the night, a light in the commander's cabin, "He's a regular owl-hunter, that old commander of ours. I suppose he is annoying the lieutenant about theory, and trying to find out if he is skilled in that manœuvre."

"I say, Pierrot, did you observe how he ordered the masts to be cut down when he found that the helm was rendered useless. He is an old fox."

"To look at him, who would think so? oh, the old fellow caring little for his hammock, will expect us to do the same."

"Well, we shall know him better by-and-bye, for they say that we set sail to-morrow."

"My faith! so much the better, for I begin to get tired of place."

CHAPTER XXIV.

MISERY,

The morning watch, which the second lieutenant mustered on deck, was interrupted by piercing shrieks, which proceeded from the hen-roost.

"What is that?" demanded M. Merval.

"Nothing, sir," replied the helmsman, "nothing. The lads are only amusing themselves with Misery. The cursed rat has come out of the hold."

"Indeed," said the second lieutenant, continuing his muster, "let them make less noise in their amusements."

The hold is that part of the vessel that lies between the keelson and the lower deck; it is divided and subdivided into several compartments, in which are shut up powder, cordage, wine, biscuit; indeed, it is a huge magazine; a subterranean town, from which the little world above takes sustenance and comfort.

Those who inhabit the hold are like a separate family. They rarely appear above board, are subject to the most arduous labour, and spend their existence in continual darkness. On land as at sea, a supernatural power is always accorded to people who live in solitude. On land hermits and shepherds are endowed with some divine gift; at sea, it is the purser's mate.

Does any one know the future? Oh yes, the purser's mate.

If anything goes amissing, the sailors immediately apply to the purser's mate.

Master Buyk was devotedly attached to the hold of the Salamander, and so little relished the open air, that when the corvette was being repaired, instead of going ashore like the sailors, he asked permission to remain a given time in a bum-boat; then he returned to the hold, as soon as the corvette had left the dock.

Figure to yourself a man enveloped in darkness, squatting on a chest, with his head in his hands—that was Master Buyk. His clothing consisted only of a pair of drill trowsers. He was above the middle stature, thin, but exceedingly muscular. The rays of the lamp, which lighted the hold, fell indistinctly upon his bald head, and exposed a face that rarely felt the cheering influence of a razor.

"Misery," he shouted with a loud voice.

"Misery, Misery, Misery." Still the same silence.

"Misery, Misery, Misery, Misery." A faint voice was then heard in the distance, saying with an accent expressive of terror—

"Here I am, master, here I am," and the voice, continuing to say, "Here I am, here I am," approached nearer and nearer; then a child about seven or eight years old bounded into the hold. That was Misery.

Master Buyk, still seated, made a sign with his hand Misery, shuddering, ran to a corner, took up a lash made of cord with knots at the end, gave it to his master, went on his knees, and presented his naked back.

"I called you four times, and you did not obey me," said Master Buyk, giving the miserable child four well dealt lashes. The poor lad wept not; in silence he rose, took the whip, with which he, unseen by Buyk, wiped his eyes, went to the place again, hung it on a nail, returned, then seated himself before his master.

"Now, tell me what kept you."

"The men were beating me, master."

"You tell a lie; you were playing."

"I playing, master; I playing," said the unfortunate boy, "who would play with me?"

Then he added with a bitter accent,

"The men and boys beat me when I speak to them; they steal my bread, and they call me the rat of the hold; and just now, master, they whipped me, saying, that ten blows given to a powder-monkey, would ensure a good wind. Oh, master, you well named me Misery," said he, sighing, for he dared not weep, and his blue flesh trembled like a leaf; the heat was suffocating, still he was cold.

"What sort of weather is it?"

"Since yesterday, master, it has been blowing a north-easter."

"And it's still a north-east wind," demanded Master Buyk, in a stentorian voice.

"Yes, master," said the boy, trembling.

"The wind is north-east," said Buyk, musing.

"Yes, master."

"Who's speaking to you?" and these five syllables were accompanied by a box on the ear.

Master Buyk fell into a profound reverie, in which he made several signs with a pebble, a cord, and his knife.

The lad moved not; he even kept in his breath, lest the least noise might awaken his master's rage, which always vented itself in blows.

The poor lad was certainly an object of pity. His mother, having died in an hospital, Master Buyk, so to speak, adopted him; but he made him pay dearly for the bread which he often did not eat. For a poor suffering child, such as he was, good nourishment, wholesome air, childish enjoyments, were essential to his existence; but he never quitted the hold,

except in obedience to his master's orders, for he was afraid of the sailors and powder-monkeys, who chased, tormented, and beat him; so that the only pleasure that the miserable creature enjoyed, was when he stole upon deck in the middle of the night, and when hidden among the rigging, the fresh air played upon his cadaverous visage. His eyes became animated as they met the bounding waves tipped with phosphoric light, through which the vessel broke; and his heart rejoiced, as he lay upon his back, listening to the gruff voice of the sea, and gazing on the stars that twinkled in the firmament.

But these moments of pleasure were brief and seldom; for he was afraid that he would not hear the voice of his master. In these moments also, he occasionally evinced an affection of the brain. Suddenly he would become pale and livid; a frightful smile would play upon his lips; his eyes would sparkle with savage lustre, and he would shout out with his feeble voice—

“The rat of the hold has good teeth—yes, good teeth, and he will gnaw the wood for you.”

Buyk, having recovered from his reverie, said,

“Go and tell Master Bouquin that I wish to see him.”

Misery sighed, for he well knew what he had to expect. No sooner did he appear upon the battery, than the lads shouted out—

“The rat of the hold—the rat, the rat.”

And all the powder-monkeys, and many of the sailors of the battery, pursued poor Misery, to whom fear seemed to lend agility, for he twisted himself round the corners with the elasticity of the serpent. At last he succeeded to get upon the deck, where Bouquin was, and on telling him that his master wished to see him, he received a kick, with the epithet—

“Cursed rat, it is you. Off, off. What does the old sorcerer want with me?”

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PREDICTION.

“Well, old Beelzebub,” said Bouquin, entering the hold, “you wish to spin a yarn with an old ’un, do you? Thunder! how suffocating it is; and your cursed abode is so dark, that if a fellow was drinking, he would not know whether he emptied two or four bottles. But since you speak of drinking,” he added, although Master Buyk had not yet opened his mouth, “come, give us a swig of something. I don’t care what it is, for I have a dry cough, and old Garnier told me to take care

of myself; and you must know that it is not for my interest, but for that of the doctor, whom we all love as a father, that I ask you; for I must first wet my throat, which is already parched, and that will be for the benefit of our old Garnier."

By way of proving his illness, Bouquin coughed so vehemently, that he almost shook the sides of the poor Salamander.

Master Buyk, absorbed in his calculations, did not reply but stretching his hand out, placed before his friend a glorious bottle of wine.

The silence pleased Bouquin too much for him to break it: and nothing was heard but a regular and measured noise like the gurgling of a fountain, a proof of the sailor's anxiety to show his faith in the medical counsel of old Garnier.

When Bouquin had all but emptied the bottle, he looked at Master Buyk, saying, "Well, old file, what the devil do you want with me?"

"Listen, Bouquin," said the other, with imperturbable gravity, "we have not yet taken a cast of the nativity of our new commander, which we ought to do, since we are going to set sail to-day."

"You are right," said Bouquin, after he had drained the bottle, and smacked his mouth several times.

"Well, I wish you to tell me all you know. Go on; do you remember how the wind blew when he came on board?"

"A south-easter, strong enough to unhorn a bullock."

"Go on."

"Well, then, he is as tall as the scuttle of a mast, and like the arsenal porter, he came rigged in cloth boots, a yellow coat, and a fur cap."

"What? the ass!" exclaimed Master Buyk, in exasperation. "To come on board the Salamander, the brave war corvette, in that fashion,"

"Well, Buyk, I think with you that it was d——d humiliating to board us in a yellow coat."

"She is a lost vessel," exclaimed Buyk, seriously.

"Do you think so?"

"What did the lieutenant say?"

"Oh, he like the rest of us was furious; but as the old fellow showed his teeth, he could say nothing. Oh, if you saw him turning up his toes in his cloth boots, and looking so mild; but the other day, I heard the lieutenant say that the commander was a regular sea-wolf, only he did not look so; and that's true enough, for he has rather the look of the uncle of poor Geromin, who deals out holy water at the church of St. Louis."

"How astonishing!"

"Aye, and the helmsman, on seeing all, said that it was done purposely, for if you had seen him come on board, he appeared more like a shopkeeper looking at a vessel as a

seventh wonder, of which he asked a thousand foolish questions. Still he is an old dragon, and we must keep out of his clutches."

"His name?"

"The Marquis of Longetour, a nobleman."

"Begins with an L, and he came on board during a north wind; and it was on a Friday."

"Yes; and instead of going to the poop he went abaft."

"The devil he did!"

"And when the flag was hoisted, three knots were made."

"Oh!"

"And it was thirteen days before the typhon, and seven after the cursed oil-eaters assassinated Geromin."

"Seven days."

"Aye, and even on the very same day that M. Paul fell from the rigging, and escaped killing himself."

At these words Master Buyk bounded furiously, saying, "Enough, enough, Bouquin. Poor corvette! poor Salamander! Do you see, this Marquis will be the destruction of the corvette; and, in that case, will be also the death of poor M. Paul, for he is, as I have told you a hundred times, the guardian angel of the Salamander, and that the destruction of the one could not take place without that of the other, for he was born the day that she was launched. Oh, poor Salamander!" he added, sadly, "I who saw thee first launched—thy doom is fixed."

"What! blubbering like an old fool."

"An old fool," repeated Master Buyk, in anger. "Is it not true that when the corvette was fighting with the English frigate, that I foretold that if the Salamander was damaged, that Paul would be affected also? And where was she damaged? Tell me that."

"In the flank of the larboard, above the ninth porthole. I thought we were going to keep the fishes company."

"Well, was it not in the flank of the larboard, that is, in the left side, that M. Paul was wounded? I tell you, headstrong ass that you are, that whatever happens to one must happen to the other, and that this Marquis will cause the loss of both. But there is one chance left."

"What's that?"

"It is to hoist the commander overboard. He will be better with the fishes than with firebrands."

"That is not a bad idea, but there is something above that constrains us."

"What? Providence."

"The lieutenant, Master Buyk, who would have our heads served up with cartridge sauce, and who would make a splendid dish of our bodies for the fishes. And you see, Master Bouquin, if that *is to be*, it *will be*, as the Ottoman said when I was getting drunk with him at Alexandria, whose—whose—"

"Religion, I suppose," said Buyk.

"Yes, yes, religion; and you will acknowledge, Buyk, that it is not a bad one for making novices acquainted with powder and shot. They say to them, if you are blessed, you are blessed; if not, you are not. Forward! Death or life! For my part, I am of the Ottoman's way of thinking, because it is very clear, that if we leave our bones here, we shall do so; if not, we shall not; but as to ducking the captain, without warning, it is a game that I don't mean taking a hand in; and my good Buyk, I would not advise you to pipe this idea out with a loud voice, that is to say, if you value your skin. Ah! there's old La Joie's whistle, summoning all hands on deck. I suppose we are going to set sail. Good bye, old 'un; do not forget my advice."

CHAPTER XXVI.

SETTING SAIL.

A north-east wind, as the lieutenant had predicted, succeeded the typhon; so when Bouquin got on deck, each of the sailors of the corvette was at his post, and all were waiting patiently for the commander and the lieutenant. Old Garnier, the purser, M. Merval, and Paul, were deeply engaged in conversation.

"Have you seen this M. Szaffie, doctor?" demanded the purser.

"For an instant, this morning."

"What sort of a man is he?"

"A tall fellow," replied an old officer, called Bidaud, "with a proud air, and such a strange look!"

"A keen grey eye, like Buonaparte's," said the doctor; "that's something."

"Is it?" said Merval. "I saw him for a few minutes this morning. There is something noble in his walk; he has a hand as delicate as a lady's; but I do not like his countenance, which denotes foppishness and impertinence."

"Not at all," said the doctor, "it's lassitude that gives him that appearance."

"Aye, and when he speaks to you, which is very seldom," said Bidaud, "you will think him dry and splenetic, and sometimes you will imagine that he is ridiculing you."

"Go to," said Garnier, with a sneer.

"I brought him from Toulon, doctor, and I assure you when he said it was dark, I said the same, because it appeared to me

to be so; and when he said it was white, still it appeared to me to be white, although the black appeared to me black, and the white——”

“Ah,” interrupted the doctor, “I do not know if it is the cause of the black, but one thing certain is, that what you say is devilishly obscure. With your black and white, one would think that the neck of the bottle had come in contact with your vermillion lips, old fellow. Do you understand him, M. Merval?”

“Not at all.”

“It is then a riddle, Mr. Bidaud. Come, we give it up.”

Happily for poor Bidaud, the commander and the lieutenant appeared upon deck. The former, screwed up in his uniform, was pale and dejected, with half-opened eyes. The lieutenant saluted him, saying, “Commander, I will execute your orders. Anchor a-peak.” he then shouted.

It appeared to the unfortunate commander that the eyes of the crew were fixed upon him. His hair started up, his brain reeled, and mentally he sent Elizabeth to all the legions of devils that people hell.

The voice of the lieutenant was heard—a voice that thrilled the nerves of the ex-tobacconist.

“Commander, we are a-peak.”

“Indeed! Well.”

“Well, commander?” demanded M. Bidaud.

“Eh, well!” said the unfortunate Longetour, swinging his speaking-trumpet, and his head swimming. At last he made an effort, and said, “Well, let us proceed.”

“What do you say, commander?” demanded Bidaud.

Pierre could understand nothing, and was still waiting in anxiety.

“But we are a-peak, commander. Shall we not weigh anchor?”

This interrogation was like a ray of light for the commander, who said, “Certainly, do so immediately.”

“The stupid old fellow has forgotten everything,” said Pierre to himself; and, approaching the commander, he whispered in his ear, “It’s disgraceful, sir, you have not the least memory. Give me the trumpet, quick.”

“But, my friend, I know——”

“Commander, commander,” shouted M. Merval, alarmed, “we are——”

“Your trumpet, sir,” whispered Pierre.

“But think, my friend, the eyes of the whole crew are upon us. I remember now.”

“We are running upon the coast,” shouted Merval and Paul; “we are running on the coast.”

“You force me to it,” said Pierre, with a gruff voice. “For you I shall bring about my own ruin.” Saying this, he leaped upon the quarter-deck, and shouted out the requisite orders,

At that well-known voice, his brief and accented command, the crew, as if moved by one spring, acted simultaneously, and at once put the vessel out of danger. Another movement was requisite, which Pierre knew well; but he went up to the commander, and whispered in his ear, "The vessel now runs no danger; order the main jib to be set, as if knowing that I had forgotten this important point."

The Marquis, enchanted at having an opportunity of extricating himself from the humiliating position in which he was placed, raised the trumpet, and repeated the words of Pierre almost to the letter. It is true that many of the technical terms were strangely twisted, but the crew, accustomed to act in unison, understood the command, and executed the manœuvre; after which, the men broke the silence by saying,—

"Ah, the lieutenant, having interrupted the commander, should not have forgotten that. What is he thinking of? The old sea-wolf forgets nothing. Oh, he understands his affair, and, depend upon it, the lieutenant won't escape his tusks for interrupting him."

The breeze swelled the sails of the Salamander, which, yielding to the impulse, soon doubled the point of the Gulf of Grimaud.

When the corvette was fairly on her way, the commander, on receiving a sign from the lieutenant, went to his cabin, and was shortly afterwards joined by the latter.

"Indeed, sir," said Pierre, on entering, "it is certainly vexing to find that you have no memory."

"There is one thing, my dear lieutenant, the task was somewhat difficult, but thanks to you, I got over it very well, and I must tell you that you have my heartfelt gratitude."

"Your thanks and gratitude, sir! why, on the contrary, you must punish me, for although it was not my fault, I have, for the first time in my life, failed in discipline by commanding in your place, without having received a formal order before the whole crew."

"But it was for the good of the service, my friend."

"But, sir, it is a frightful example. Understand, that if a vessel was running on breakers, the officers or men have no right to change a single word of the command given, although that word would save all from destruction. You see, then, that I have infringed, although with a good intention, the rules of discipline; and severe punishment can alone check the dangerous effects that my insubordination may have upon the men."

"It is strange, my friend, that you would force me to punish you when——"

"You will make me suffer a hundred deaths with your objections; you must understand that it is not for you, it is for

your grade; for that," he said, shaking violently the Marquis's shining epaulette: "it is in honour of that, sir, which is for you and me a thing of life and death; for if a single fault escape unpunished, to-morrow the crew might discuss our orders; might, perhaps, in murmuring, revolt; and after menacing us, guide the vessel according to their own caprices,"

"Come, come, my friend, do not be angry. I will do what you desire. You shall be punished, since such is your wish."

Pierre, in pity and contempt, shrugged his shoulders, and said, "Do you not think, sir, that it is painful, cruelly painful, for me at my age to be brought before the navy as insubordinate; I, sir, who am, and ever was, a great stickler for discipline. But it matters not; punishment inflicted on an officer for want of discipline will have a salutary effect on all, and will induce the crew to respect, as it ought, subordination. Nevertheless, what you must write in that journal, and by my order, will, perhaps, for ever blast the hopes I once entertained of being promoted."

"Indeed, my friend!"

"Yes, I will sacrifice all to the honour of the navy to which I belong, and my conscience will reward me for what I do. You, sir, are before the eyes of all, while I am in obscurity. Though there are five hundred naval lieutenants, there are only fifty captains of frigates, who ought to be, in the eyes of the sailors, chosen men of courage and integrity. Besides, sir, a stain appears more glaring upon the brodered coat of a commander than it does upon the blue frock of a subaltern officer."

"But, my God, since I am going to punish you, what would you have more?"

"That's so far good," said Pierre.

The Marquis, dictated by Pierre, wrote in his journal the act of insubordination of the lieutenant, who had dared, before the whole crew, to interrupt the orders of his commander, and who, for this act, was condemned to fifteen days' imprisonment. This was copied into the purser's journal. The importance of these books may be conceived, on understanding that they are scrupulously taken care of on board, and on the arrival of the vessel in France, they are sent to the ministry, and serve as testimonies of the conduct of the officers, and historical accounts of the mission on which the vessel was sent.

Well, on Friday, the 15th of August, 1815, the *Salaman* left the roads of St. Tropez about eleven o'clock in the mornin and at five in the evening the high hills of Corsica were distinguishable.

CHAPTER XXVII.

BUENO VIAJE.

Glide, fly rapidly over the azure sea, dear and worthy Salamander! Adieu, France! Adieu, fair Provence! so fruitful in oranges, with climate so exhilarating, and inhabitants so hospitable.

Thou goest to Smyrna, brave corvette; to Smyrna, the city of the east, of gold, and of the sun—where marble vases are filled with limpid and perfumed waters, and shaded by the sycamore and palm-tree. City of luxuries and voluptuousness, of opium, and of coffee! thou art indeed rich in all that creates delight.

Oh, the life of the east! the life of the east! the only one indeed which is not a long and tedious deception; for in it there is none of that happiness in theory, no speculative felicity. No, no: true, positive, and proved happiness exists there.

People think that these pleasures are purely sensual. On the contrary, it is the most spiritual existence which is attendant on an indolent and contemplative life. Didst thou ever know an eastern who was not a poet, for he inhales intoxication and poesy; and intoxication is the poetry of chance. Besides, does he not drink poesy from three sources—his Nargualek, his cup, and his opium.

The poesy inspired by Nargualek is aerial and undivided, like the embalmed vapour which he inhales. It is a confused harmony, a fairy dream, a thought that comes and flies away, and comes again; a sylph-like form that appears half naked, and is occasionally veiled in the balmy fumes of the tobacco of the Levant.

Then there is the poetry of the coffee, which is more energetic, more fixed. Ideas crowd the mind, shoot forth, and develop themselves in marvellous lucidity. Imagination spreads her fiery wings, and bears you to the highest regions of thought. Ages roll before your eyes, vivid and rapid, like the banks of a river, when you are carried away by a flood. Then meditations upon men, on the soul, and upon God, spring forth; meditations on all systems, on all beliefs; when all is adopted, all is approved of, and all believed. Whilst indulging in this sublime hallucination, turn by turn, we feel an inward conviction of the verity of each; and at one moment think ourselves a Christ, a Mahomet, and a Cæsar; indeed I cannot tell what else.

Then there is the poesy that opium inspires—a poetry fantastic, nervous, and convulsive; which sums up the term of the

poetic existence. That which Faust so long sought, and which damned Manfred, opium will give. You invoke the shades, and the shades appear. If you wish to participate in frightful mysteries, then you have a strange, infernal, superhuman drama, in which are indefinable sounds, and anguish that would destroy, if prolonged. In one instant you change this hideous picture, and a ravishing vision of love, of women, or of glory, ensues.

Then, after hovering in these high atmospheres, and tasting their sublime intellectual delights, you take refuge in the harem, amongst groups of lovely, submissive, and loving women. Delights there are there, without number, full of variety and tenderness. This is the sensual life which succeeds the intellectual one. Then, plunged into the languor of thought, you become stupid and inert. All your senses sleep, except one, and that one increases the inward feeling of the dormant state of the others; so you are as happy as a sot, and you enjoy the happiness of sots. *Bone Deus!*

This is not vain theory, or an eutopia on pleasure.

The tobacco deceives not; nor does the coffee or opium. Their reaction upon our nervous systems is positive, and physiologically proved and deduced. Our moral organization is influenced by them. Sad or gay, happy or wretched, our sensations change by a puff of tobacco, ten grains of coffee, or a morsel of opium.

Nor do the women of your harem deceive you, for, brought up in it, you are the only man they have ever seen, or will ever see.

Thus, if your tobacco, your coffee, and your opium, be of a superior quality; if you be rich enough to give to a Georgian six thousand piastres, try to find me a single deception in this intellectual existence, whose happiness is complete—for it is not founded upon a fragile bases, such as the heart of a woman, or of a friend, but upon materials that are bought by the ounce, and that are found in all the bazaars of Smyrna and Constantinople.

And it is into this country that thou takest the honest crew that thou cradlest in thy bosom, my honest Salamander!

For five days heaven blessed thee, for it was impossible to have a calmer sea, a more favourable breeze; indeed, in the memory of sailors such was never known to be surpassed.

The good Marquis had become perfectly accustomed to his new existence. Pierre gave orders, made astronomical observations, directed the crew, and maintained the strict discipline of the vessel. Indeed, Pierre did everything, but always under the appearance of performing the orders of his commander.

Old Garnier still tormented the purser, and cursed and swore at *his children* for not telling him when they were suffering.

Merval, the second lieutenant, not able to ingratiate himself into the good graces of Alice, made friends with Madame Bleiné, while the new officer, Bidaud, eat, drank, and slept.

It is already known that Paul loved Alice; but Paul's love was deep and holy, for the remembrance of his mother was connected with every thought, and purified and sanctified that passion—a passion so linked with his existence, that in the midst of the delight that it inspired in him, he might have thought of dying, but not that he was not beloved by Alice, for that to him would have been a thousand deaths.

He became habituated to that passion, as one becomes habituated to his existence; nevertheless, he had never dared to risk an avowal, but his whole conduct avowed his love.

Alice was pleased with Paul; spent hours in listening to the stories of his infancy, to the projects of his boyhood—and the tear would occasionally moisten her eye. She admired his free and open disposition, and shared in the illusions that buoyed his heart. Then what would not Paul do for her! To get a glimpse of her at the window of her cabin, to receive a smile, or a sign from her lily hand—how often did he risk being drowned, by suspending himself by a rope, one end fastened to some part of the ship, with the other skimming on the water.

In truth, I think Alice loved Paul, for with him she appeared so happy; only the young girl wished an avowal, for she often saw her aunt and Paul's father exchanging strange looks in regard to them. She wished an avowal, for to her, in her virginal ignorance, all was in the words, "I love you." Till then it might be friendship—till then there was room for doubt. But the words, "I love you," would produce a twittering so lively, an emotion so profound. Therefore the poor girl sighed only for the avowal of Paul.

M. Szaïffe, however, the passenger who was going to Smyrna, produced a singular impression on board the Salamander. Till then that little colony was happy; all appreciated qualities, and excused faults, and mutual concessions rendered life pleasant. But the day that Szaïffe came on board, that state of things changed.

Not that he was meddling or importunate; on the contrary, it was impossible to meet a more polished gentleman, who, endowed with tact and good taste, set aside his high position, and from that means gained influence. There was something in him, however, that was strange and inexplicable. He was about thirty years of age; his features regular, his face pale, and countenance grave. His large eyes occasionally assumed a charming expression of mildness, but oftener that of bitter sadness. His figure was tall, athletic, and admirably shaped; and the care which he paid to his simple yet elegant toilette, rendered him physically handsome; but these exterior advan-

tages were effaced by his strange conversation, which, absorbing so much, engrossed the attention of all.

Sometimes his countenance became animated, his cheeks coloured up, and he expressed ideas the most singular and most ingenious—paradoxes producing laughter and tears—and all with the *naïveté* of a child, or with the sad mockery of old age. Sometimes frightful truths upon men and women, and raileries on the human species, issued from his lips, and then, as if the auditors had left him, he stopped, fell into his usual taciturnity, rose, and went to his favourite seat by the poop, where he remained for hours in meditation.

This singular conduct was probably caused from his consciousness of his own superiority—for he was skilled in everything. With Pierre he conversed freely on the marine, with old Garnier on physiology, on painting with Madame de Bleiné, and on music with Alice; but always with a marked indifference to the opinion of the person with whom he spoke, which tended to excite a repulsive and painful feeling.

His appearance always suppressed mirth, and at his departure hearts dilated, and smiles again played upon the cheek.

One evening, about five days after weighing anchor, coffee was served up in the commander's room, where the worthy Marquis had invited Madame and Mademoiselle Bleiné, M. Szaffie, and the ship's officers. Never was the raillery of Szaffie more biting or more cruel; never had he displayed such sarcasm, and never did he with greater effect call to his aid philosophy with all its soft and endearing effects. At this moment he was sarcastic, at that one mild and philosophical; then he rose, and left the company in a state of doubt and stupor.

"What a devil of a fellow!" said the Marquis, striking his leg with the palm of his hand.

"I can't understand that strange being," said the doctor. "He first makes us sad, then he consoles us. We hate him at one moment, and love him at another. I wish he were ill, for it is in bed that we can probe the heart of man. Oh, that he were ill!"

shows a galled heart. Do you not think so, M. Paul?"

"Yes, mademoiselle, like you I find that he too often shows man in his most degraded state. I pity him; for he does not know how much good, how much nobleness, and greatness there is in man. Crimes and vices are only the dark shadows of the picture; but I am sure if he only knew my father, he would no longer doubt the greatness of the soul."

Alice recompensed this filial expression by a sweet look, and a smile of tenderness.

"There is," said Madame Bleinè, "a strangeness in his look, an expression which is almost indefinable."

"I am sure that he is either a very wicked or a very wretched man," said Alice; then she became silent and pensive.

"Perhaps he is both," said the doctor; "but if God in his goodness would afflict him with some disease, I would soon know that"

"It is not what he eats that will make him ill," said the Marquis; "except a kind of Turkish dish which his own cook makes, he eats nothing; and as for his drink, his valet gives him cold tea with a little champagne in it."

"What a beverage!" said the doctor; "perhaps that is caused from previous excesses."

"What would you have?" said the Marquis, philosophically. "It is impossible to be, and to have always been—"

"Still, commander," interrupted the doctor, "we can have a game at draughts, although we had one yesterday. What do you say to that?"

"My faith, doctor, my answer is, let us play."

The Marquis and the doctor seated themselves before the draught-board; Madame Bleinè resumed her embroidery, and Alice looked out of the window to contemplate the sun, which was setting in the midst of rays of gold.

Szaffie was also contemplating the setting sun.

• CHAPTER XXVIII.

SZAFFIE.

Pierre was on the quarter-deck when Szaffie appeared above-board. The lieutenant advanced towards him, but after exchanging a few words, under the pretext of giving an order, he walked away, for the gloomy expression which darkened the pale countenance of the passenger, was anything but agreeable to him.

When the lieutenant was a few paces off, Szaffie leaped into the captain's gig, seated himself, hid his face in his two hands, and became lost in meditation.

Szaffie was plunged into one of those moods, when the mind, harrowing up the events of days long gone by, enables us to contemplate with one glance the present and the past.

An orphan, and of noble birth, he was at an early age put in possession of a large fortune. On entering the world, he met a cordial reception, for he was handsome, rich, accomplished,

and intellectual. So he lavished those fresh emotions, that pure and chaste exaltation, those sublime thoughts which God establishes in the heart of every man—admirable feelings that some retain till old age, and which others dissipate in a day. And Szaffie, having dissipated them, felt his soul vacant and withered when about twenty years of age.

The success that attended his attacks on the fair, created contempt for that sex; and his high attainments and intellectual qualities disclosed the nakedness of man, and contempt for his fellow-creatures resulted therefrom. By a strange caprice in our organisation, the men who receive the most from the world are those who are the most severe with it. Man—above all, the intellectual one—has moments of sadness, of discouragement, which partakes of bitter contempt for himself; and when he thinks that he, so degraded in his own eyes, is adulated and almost worshipped, he either hates or disdains mankind. When he reaches this state, he reflects for a last time, again searches his heart, but finds it dead and insensible to everything. For the last time he examines causes and effects, and finds in the happiness that attends him, the source of real and imaginary evils that torture without relaxation. Then by a sentiment of monomania, he begins to curse this world, which, in making him happy, renders him miserable; and his heart, vibrating no longer to the words—love, virtue, or ambition, has a prolonged echo for the word *hatred*.

And the heart of Szaffie bounded with joy. He had discovered a fresh cord in his soul—a mine full of emotions.

“After all,” said he, in the midst of his reflections, “whether it is from the excess of pleasure or of chagrin, the world has rendered me miserable; it has destroyed every feeling; yet there is one left, keen, cutting, and implacable; and the world must sustain the reaction.”

Then he only acted with that idea—to do all possible evil to humanity; not that physical evil that the law forbids; but that evil, that moral assassination that it tolerates, at which society even occasionally smiles. As a spiritual murderer, Szaffie wished to attack the soul, not the body.

This new futurity which he had created for himself, excited forcibly his ardent and disordered imagination. He felt that he required still more the advantages that he possessed; so he launched again into the world more handsome and more seductive than ever; for that predominant idea had given his features a strange expression, which distinguished him still more from other men.

The most sordid baseness, the most vile ingratitude, and the most revolting caprice, were looked upon by him as natural occurrences to which he was insensible; he regarded men and women by a sombre light, and was always suspicious of them.

By a strange coincidence, Szaffie, with a withered heart, retained the head of a young man, with the imagination of a poet—an imagination which threw a mantle of poesy over all; which, in conjunction with his heart of guile, gave him the means of imitating every emotion to attain his end; and so young, so handsome, so rich, and so fascinating, had he not everything calculated to ensure success.

To think that that charming exterior, frequently affected by melancholy, which often reveals a tender and innocent heart—to think that all was false, even his youth—that his warm and animated words, that his sudden outbursts in praise of virtue, in condemnation of vice, were false; to think that Szaffie, in conformation with his dark and hateful heart, employed these brilliant masks to entrap virtue.

He believed not in friends, yet he was open to friendship, and courted it; then his keen eye discovered in each individual the vice or quality which he wished to foster or extinguish.

He did not believe in love, for to him it had been only a thing of convenience; still he employed the purest and most exciting language, the most ingenious seductions, and the most unheard-of devotedness, to entrap the innocent heart. He no longer believed in love, yet his eyes were often bathed in tears; often did his heart palpitate, his lips quiver; and his melodious voice—pathetic words interrupted by half-suppressed sighs and kisses—found, quick as the electric flash, responses in the heart.

So when a poor confiding woman, fascinated, lost, forgetting all for him, and tortured by remorse, said in tears—"I am at least loved," Szaffie would, in cold and cruel sarcasm, bare his soul; and tell her of his feigned passion—that he had no love, no desire; that she was his victim, and that—like a criminal, whose secret is known to some man, who brings him, as it were, face to face with the scaffold twenty times a day—she was absolutely in his power.

The wretch enjoyed the tears and sobs that escaped her, probed daily the moral wound which he had inflicted; and to see that heart writhe in torture and in remorse, filled him with delight. Then, when he was fatigued with the nervous irritation which that frightful spectacle caused, he fell into those dark and poignant aberrations of mind, which, by a just punishment of God, is the gall of the wicked heart.

Such is an imperfect analysis of the character of Szaffie.

As Szaffie sat in the long-boat, contemplating the abyss which he had made in his own heart, he was seized with a swimming in the head, for he saw his soul naked, cold, and withered—his soul which he had stripped of all its pure and primitive beliefs, the fresh and unartificial illusions of youth—illusions which God gives us as a thousand-clouded prism, to colour with its

magic reflections all that which in the reality would tend to create despair.

For in his tenebrious voyage of thought, Szaffie saw his soul void and sombre, without one recollection on which he could rest, without one consoling idea with which he might refresh his withered heart; there was nothing but death and despair; for, having broken all the links which united him to humanity, he saw himself alone in the world—alone with his hatred.

Szaffie lifted his hand; his face was paler than usual, and on his brow was a frightful expression of the most poignant grief.

"Oh!" said he, "to live thus—is it life? I have lived for love, now I live for hatred; but when this passion is satiated like the other, what will follow? Suicide! I only shun it to come back to it again—then afterwards! Annihilation! Horrible thought! Still life is too much to bear. To annihilate in order to shun annihilation. Oh, if I could but believe in hell!"

Here he hid his head in his hands, then suddenly raising it, and looking up to heaven, he said, with a frightful smile, "Hell might cause sensations. Is it possible to love others when I despise myself? No, no, let my wild destiny be completed there. Hell! Afterwards—hell, if there is one. But no," he added, with an expression of despair and singular regret, "there is no hell."

He leapt up, walked along the deck, and was met by the second lieutenant, Merval, who said, with all the frivolity of a free-hearted, thoughtless young man, "You are a poet, I presume. This lovely evening ought to inspire you. Now tell me the subject on which you were meditating.

"On evangelical charity, sir," replied Szaffie, with a smile that froze the blood of the young lieutenant.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A SAIL.

Next morning by sunrise, the officers of the corvette were assembled upon deck.

Pierre was looking through the telescope at a distant object; the commander, his eye fixed, and his neck stretched out, appeared waiting with anxiety the result of his lieutenant's observations.

"I was sure of it," said Pierre, turning towards the commander. "I must tell you, that as Algerine pirates frequent this coast, it will probably be requisite—— But how pale you are! What is the matter?"

"Nothing, my friend, nothing—I—"

"Very well; I was telling you that probably we must pursue some of those pirates if they come in * way. Therefore I must go and examine the magazine, and see that everything is in fighting condition."

"Oh, my God—my God! a combat—we are lost!" said the poor Marquis, wringing his hands with an expression of the greatest fear.

"Yes, commander," said Pierre, with a loud voice, and with the appearance of replying to the Marquis. "M. Merval, hoist the mainsail."

"Yes, lieutenant," said M. Merval, and the order was instantly given and as speedily executed.

"But," said the Marquis, pale as death, "in the name of heaven, lieutenant, are you sure there is no danger?"

"Yes, commander," said the lieutenant, with a loud voice.

"M. Merval, the commander finds that we do not carry sail enough—that we are not making way. Let the studding-sails be set."

The order was no sooner given,* than it was obeyed, and the vessel rushed rapidly through the water.

"Did you hear that, *la Joie*," said Bouquin, whispering, "do you hear that old conger with the fur cap? Look at our sails; the lieutenant is fond of cloth, but he is a mere powder-monkey, contrasted with that old sea-wolf. Dam'ne, see how we fly."

"Good God! the vessel will be upset," cried the ex-tobacconist, pale with fear.

"One word more, commander," said Pierre, "and I will mount the royals."

"I do not know what you mean by the royals," replied the poor Marquis. "Oh, yes, I understand. I will not speak: I will not complain. But are you really going to open the place where the powder is."

"It is the affair of a moment. Have you anything there, commander?"

"Is it near my room?"

"Why, certainly; it is under your head."

"What! I sleep upon powder?"

"Certainly. Is it not the place of honour, sir? Is it not convenient for a captain, should chances be against him, to make his vessel leap into the air."

"Leap! leap! Oh, my God, we are lost."

"Come, commander," said Pierre, leading the Marquis to his cabin, and suppressing his voice so that no one could hear him, "I am afraid that you are a coward."

"Sir!"

"One thing is certain that as long as I am lieutenant of the

Salamander—as long as I can draw the trigger of a pistol, I assure you that your epaulettes will remain spotless.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean that if I see you about to commit an act of cowardice—you understand, a cowardly act——”

“Well!”

“This pistol will put an end to your existence. I will be shot for so doing, I am well aware; but your uniform will be without a stain.”

“But in the name of heaven——”

“In the name of heaven, think of what I am telling you. I shall have my eye upon you, and I give you my word of honour—the word of a mariner, that I will do what I say. I never was known to break my word. Then, listen, commander. We shall soon reach that sail ahead of us—perhaps it’s nothing, perhaps a great deal. I am going to give orders for everything to be in readiness. In half an hour we shall be within shot; perhaps the commands which I shall whisper in your ear, will summon up your courage.”

“When?”

“When fighting, if there be a fight.”

“If there be a battle, I cannot remain quiet here.”

“Whether we fight or not, as soon as we come within shot you shall go upon deck, and looking at the preparations, you will say, ‘Lieutenant, command the affray, and may God grant that the shot may take effect,’ or anything else that you please that bears the same meaning. Then you will perch yourself upon the quarter-deck, from which you will not budge till the firing is over. Remark well, sir, what I say, for at the least appearance of fear or cowardice, I shall be at your side; remember, my eye will be upon you. Now, commander,” he added, respectfully, “I shall go and prepare all as if I were executing your orders.”

“But,” cried the poor Marquis——

Pierre, bowing profoundly to the Marquis, withdrew before the latter could finish his sentence.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE RENEGADE.

On leaving the commander’s cabin, Pierre met his son.

“Oh, father” cried the young midshipman, his face beaming with joy, “is it true that we are going to have a fight?”

"It is possible, my son, and on that account you must come with me to my room."

"Paul," said the lieutenant, taking down a sabre that hung in the cabin, "this is for you. It is an excellent Turkish blade, with a guard to shield the hand and part of the arm. In boarding a vessel, it will be found highly serviceable."

"And what are you to have, father?"

"You know that I have poor Bremont's sword, which is an excellent one. Are your pistols in good order?"

"Yes, father."

"Go and bring them, that I may see."

"They are in good order, father."

"Paul, bring them to me."

"Yes, father," said the young man, going away, while the lieutenant followed him with his eyes; then raising them with fervour upwards, he added, "O God, may it be thy will not yet to separate us!"

Paul returned with his pistols; his father examined the locks, and throwing one of them aside, took another from his chest, saying, "This one is more certain, my son. Load both well, and above all, let me have no imprudent rashness like the last time—no leaving your post. Remain upon the battery."

"But, father——"

"Sir!"

"Yes, father, I will remain there; but where will you be?"

"My post is on the quarter-deck."

"That is a very conspicuous place, father."

"Jealous rascal," said the good lieutenant, "you envy my position, do you?"

At this moment a sailor entered, saying, "Lieutenant, I am sent to inform you that we are almost within shot of the vessel."

"Say that I will be on deck in an instant," answered Pierre! then turning to his son, he added, "come, Paul, embrace me, and let us be men."

To appreciate fully the tenderness of this embrace, which might have been the last, one must, on a similar occasion, look in one's arms a father or a friend.

When Pierre and his son appeared upon deck, their countenances did not express the least sign of emotion.

"Well, lieutenant," said Merval, handing him the telescope, "we know what she is."

"We shall soon see what she's made of," said Pierre, smiling.

A blank shot was fired, but no answer was given; a second, however, with a bullet, had a better effect.

"So much the better," said the lieutenant, on seeing a red flag slowly hoisted.

"Bouquin has hit his mark, lieutenant; and has roused the

vessel from her slumbers," said Merval; "see, they are preparing to launch the long boat."

"Very good," said the lieutenant, "I must inform the commander."

The conversation that took place between the unfortunate Marquis and his lieutenant is not forgotten. According to the plans of the latter, the ex-tobacconist, mounted on the poop, in full uniform, stood motionless, his eyes fixed upon Pierre, who never lost sight of him.

If the poor Marquis merited punishment, he certainly received it during the half-hour of incertitude, in the most painful suspense, for he had no other distraction than that caused by Pierre, who came from time to time and whispered in his ear, "Think of my promise. At the least sign—you understand."

Then, after that friendly communication, Pierre saluted the commander, as if he had received some important order.

The crew, observing the inflexible countenance of the Marquis in the midst of the preparations for a fight, imagined that it was his usual *sang-froid* in time of danger; so Bouquin, pointing to him, said, "La Joie, La Joie, look at the old file in his uniform. Dam'me, he looks like a scarecrow; but he is an old fire-eater, depend upon it, who cares little about thirty-two-pounders. Planted like a mast, he will not budge from his place; and you see even when the lieutenant speaks in his ear, the old file does not as much as move his head. He's a dragon, depend upon it."

When the first shot was fired by the Salamander, to cause the brig to show her colours, the unfortunate Marquis, although warned, started fearfully.

"Oh, the old sea-wolf," said Bouquin, pulling La Joie by the vest, "he jumps with joy at the commencement of the dance. Take care of your skins, my boys. Is he not a devil for fighting, La Joie? Be calm, old fellow; we shall dance soon enough, old bullet-eater."

Fortunately, however, for the bullet-eater, the fight did not begin, for the brig hoisted her colours, and sent her boat at the somewhat surly invitation of the corvette.

Pierre approached the Marquis, and whispered in his ear, "You can now go to your cabin."

The ex-tobacconist did not require to be told twice.

The boat was manned by four men, clothed in the Egyptian garb, that is, a shirt, a red cap, and trousers that reached the knee. Amongst them was a man about forty years of age, rather corpulent, who wore a green frock-coat, and a blue cap. He mounted on deck, saluted Merval, and said, in tolerable good French, with a Norman accent, "Can you tell me, lieutenant, what I can do for you?"

"You were long in hoisting your colours, sir," said Pierre,

who was astonished to find a Norman steering under Turkish colours.

"My faith, lieutenant, I was sleeping; my mate is ill; and before I had time to rouse these animals," pointing to the Egyptians, "we received one of your bullets."

"But you are French, Sir," said Pierre.

"Yes, lieutenant, a native of Vire."

"And how do you steer under Turkish colours?"

"I am a Turk also."

"Sir, let your answers be in seriousness—it is an officer of the royal marine of France who interrogates you."

"Well, lieutenant, I am a Turk, because—I have become an apostate."

"Ah! a renegade," said Pierre, with contempt.

"And ready to serve you," said the other, taking off his cap.

"Where are you going?" demanded Pierre.

"To Gibraltar, with grain from Odessa. Here are my letters and papers, which were examined by the English consul at Constantinople, and which you will find in order."

"With your permission," said Pierre, "I will send one of my officers to examine your brig. It is an arrangement made by the Three Powers, in order, if possible, to capture Sam Bai, the pirate."

"May God—I mean to say, may Mahomet aid you, lieutenant. But come as soon as you can, for I am anxious to arrive at Gibraltar with my cargo."

"M. Merval," said Pierre, "let the long-boat be armed, examine the brig, and bring me a report."

The whistle of *La Joie* was heard, the boat was launched and armed, and Merval, accompanied by the renegade, left the corvette.

"Lieutenant," said the Norman, "I wish you a pleasant voyage."

"Adieu, sir," said Pierre, coldly; then he added, with a stern voice, "Merval, leave half of the men in the boat, and at the least demonstration of hostility, give the signal. The brig, you know, is under our cannon. Prudence, however, is essential."

The boat left the *Salamander*, and Pierre kept his eyes fixed upon it.

At the expiration of half an hour, Merval returned.

"Well, Merval," demanded the lieutenant, "what news?"

"Everything is, lieutenant, as the fellow stated. The vessel is laden with corn, even to his room. The crew, however, is numerous; the mate is an Italian, a renegade like himself, who was in bed, and very pale. He answered the questions I put in bad French. In fact, everything agrees with what the stout man said."

"You saw no arms?"

"Only a few guns in the cabin, that's all. For a renegade, the fellow seems rather pleasant."

"Yes, yes, but I do not like apostacy. It is only subterfuge, which is degrading."

"I am of your opinion; but, look, he wishes to know if he may leave."

"Yes, let him know that he may;" and a blue and yellow flag was immediately hoisted.

Scarcely had the signal been perceived by the brig, than she hoisted her maintopsail, to profit by the breeze, which was blowing fresh; and when out of cannon-shot of the corvette, she unfurled everything, from her royals to her staysail, with admirable quickness and precision, and began to fly with prodigious velocity.

"There's a trading brig for you," said the lieutenant, skaking his head, "that knows how to manœuvre better than many war ships."

"Shall we pursue her?" demanded Merval.

"No, she is in form. Besides, quick though the corvette is, that brig would show us her hull. No, we must think no more about her."

"In the devil's name," demanded Merval, "what makes her fly away so fast?"

"My faith, I don't know," said the lieutenant, as he descended to tell the Marquis what had occurred.

The worthy ex-tobacconist, delighted at having escaped a threatened danger, asked Pierre if it would not be advisable to double the sailors' rations.

"Yes, commander, to-morrow will be Sunday. They wish to make themselves merry, and have asked me to give them permission to have a ball, which I have accorded in your name."

"And you have done right," said the good-hearted Marquis.

The news of this generous act soon spread on board, and each thought gaily of the ball and double rations of the following day.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE PARADOX.

The crew of the Salamander experienced great disappointment, for all had expected a fearful combat. It was like a drama without a denouement—love stifled before its last phase—ambition miscarried; it was, indeed, one of those common

deceptions which occasionally thwart the best concerted provisions.

Indeed, those preparations for war, those instinctive emotions of fear which the bravest experience when the question of life and death is to be resolved; these testimonies of profound affection, which are only given on solemn occasions—all were caused by a Norman renegade who was peaceably carrying on his commerce. Exalted hearts, buoyant hopes, were suddenly damped; there was, I repeat, something sad in these men, who had made up their minds to sacrifice their lives, and who had surmounted that which costs the most—the first moment. That which follows is the hope of a favourable combat—a rare occurrence in the time of peace.

The faces of the men bore the impress of disappointment, and Paul, above all others, could not conceal his sorrow. To lose such an opportunity of distinguishing himself in the eyes of Alice, gave rise to bitter complaints, which did not escape the keen observation of Szaffie, for this passenger had already remarked his pure, loving, and primitive character, contrasted it with the withered organisation of those he had hitherto met; and envied the open and candid heart of the young man.

Yes; Szaffie, driven by a hellish desire for evil, wished to dry up, or as he would say, enlighten that young and ardent soul, because his own was withered; to snatch from that young man the poetic illusions, in which the lad only discovered sentiments the most pure and devoted; while he, on the contrary, could only see hatred, vice, and crime.

So it was the soul, and not the body, he wished to kill; and he called this seeing the *truth*. Such, then, is man's justice, that he punishes with death those persons, who, on dealing out blow, produce sudden death; but he allows them with impunity to deal out, drop by drop, a violent poison, which shortly burns, and becomes an incurable wound, that bleeds even to the grave.

To assassinate physically, death ensues; a poniard pierces you, perhaps an hour of agony ensues; then all is over; but to snatch from a pure and innocent heart its convictions, is a gash that lasts for a lifetime.

To say to the man who, on his bended knees, is uttering, "My God, I lead a bitter, sad life. My mother is dead, my wife is dead, my children are no more; but I suffer all because thou art just; for one day, if I do so without complaint—the proof of my faith which thou demandest at my hand—I shall see in heaven my mother, my wife, and my children. Therefore I desire not the grave; but if thou sendest thy messenger of death, I shall welcome and bless him." To say to this unfortunate being, "God, if he exist, loves you not; he concerns himself about the creation, your family is

dead; nothing remains after you—absolutely nothing—Cabanis and Bichat have proved it. So, instead of hoping—forget; for death is the end of all. If you suffer too much, you can exterminate yourself. Sybarite!

Well, he who coldly destroys that soul so full of life and hope; he who would drive mathematically that man to suicide—the irrefragable consequence of the extinction of all belief—the positive deduction which is applicable to man when morally dead—is he, I ask, less culpable than he who, excited or jealous, stabs his enemy or his mistress.

Such, then, was the atrocious doctrine that Szaffie wished to instil into the pure mind of the unsuspecting Paul.

The anticipated combat, which excited so much hope, causing Paul to speak of glory, gave Szaffie an admirable incident, from which he drew a faithful picture of the deceptions that torture our existence.

Paul spoke to Szaffie of glory, and the latter painted in powerful language, the position of Pierre Huet, the young man's father; Pierre Huet, who was brave and loyal, covered with wounds, and old in the service to which he had added so many laurels; still there was a stupid cowardly fellow placed over this brave man.

Paul could not deny this fact, but said that his father's glorious and noble calling made up for man's injustice.

Szaffie showed him how privations changed the softest affections of nature; and affirmed that virtue was gold, or a temperament more or less negative; that crime was a given organisation, determined by the form of the cranium; that love was a nervous affection; that genius was the effect of a brain more or less developed, and that all these were subjected to the ignoble influence of intoxication; so that the breath of God, the divine emanation, could not withstand the effects of a cup of wine; that love the most exalted, that friendship the most endearing, that genius the most powerful, were extinguished by the effluvia of a fever.

This hideous doctrine frightened the young man, for Szaffie coloured his picture with so sombre a hue, with facts so cruelly striking, with eloquence so keen and cutting, that Paul remained stupified, was seized with a giddiness in the head, and became for a moment, like that fool described by the poet who, possessing the demon of knowledge, could no longer distinguish the delicate features of woman, her transparent eyes, her silken locks, but in their stead, he saw bloody veins beneath the skin, the nerves that move the eyes, the red muscles which gave animation to the body. Horror! In her he could see nothing more than an animated corpse. Paul perceived as it is called the truth; he had probed the heart of things, and doubt consequently followed.

Scepticism is a tremendous stride, so the young man rested breathless and overcome; fascinated and frightened at the strange conversation of Szaffie. Yes, Paul, instead of believing began to doubt, for biting raillery left eternal traces on his intelligent mind. Poor Paul had, up to that time, escaped that abstract and positive education—the last degree of extreme civilisation, which consumes itself by its own lustre, and which despoils man of his remaining illusions.

This is an irreparable evil, for who can ever find again belief when once lost. Who would not give all the cold and profound knowledge of the sceptic for the inward feelings of him, who, on bended knees and clasped hands, offers up a prayer to his Maker, thanking him, even in his sufferings, for the kindness done unto him.

Who would not exchange the implacable reasoning, the despairing science of the materialist, for the consoling conviction of him who trusts to meet all that is dear to him in another and a better world?

Who would not change that bitter contempt of the world—that sad mockery which indicates a state of incredulity, for that belief in which there is so much happiness?

Oh! how naked and withered is the soul that sees everything; that believes in nothing; that loves nothing; for then it has become an heir to wretchedness.

What a frightful life; and Paul had made his first step in it—and the first step is everything—for the road that leads to atheism is so steep that once on it there is scarcely any possibility of stopping.

Still how different was Paul's situation to that of Szaffie. The latter, whose soul was glutted with pleasure, lived still for his hatred; his soul was like a burning volcano, that had swallowed up fresh waters, fertile plains, and sweet scented flowers, and vomited the lava that boiled in its entrails. But the soul of Paul was like a weak and tender flower that fades and dies when taken from its parent stem.

With a sad heart, and tears in his eyes, he demanded, in an agonising tone, "Oh! Sir; why have you told me all this? you do not know the evil that you are doing me. What a frightful doctrine is yours."

Szaffie replied that the system was not his, but that of men who did not believe in anything. He added, with a sardonic smile, "As for me, I believe in the infinite perfection of humanity;" then walked away.

In the absence of that infernal being, Paul tried to dispel the terrible thoughts into which his soul had been plunged. The poor lad thought of his father, of his mother, and of his love for Alice. These soft and tender recollections acted like a ray of hope, and of consolation, but like a bird whose wing is broken.

he made vain attempts to reach that plenitude of happiness, that serenity of mind which he had previously experienced.

Frightened, he ran to his father.

Pierre had, according to his own desire, been condemned to fifteen days' imprisonment for his act of insubordination. A sailor, therefore, was at the door of his cabin.

"I wish to speak to my father," said the young man.

"The lieutenant, Monsieur Paul, has forbidden the entrance of any one. It is the punishment awarded to him."

"But," Paul said, in anguish, "I wish to speak to my father. I must see him."

"Lieutenant," cried the sailor, "M. Paul wishes to see you. Shall I allow him to pass?"

Pierre appeared at the door, and addressing his son, said, with a discontented air, "Do you not know this man's duty?"

"Father," cried Paul; "for pity's sake, father, let me speak to you. I am suffering, father."

At that pitiful voice the lieutenant was on the point of giving way by ordering the sailor to allow Paul to pass, but the idea of insubordination starting in his mind, he said, "It is impossible, Paul; but if there is anything the matter, go to my old friend; Garnier."

Saying this he shut the door.

"Oh God!" exclaimed Paul, pressing his hand against his forehead; then, as if struck by a sudden thought, he added, "At least, Alice will listen to me," and disappeared.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LOVE.

The commander was playing at draughts with Madame de Blein . Alice was seated in the back cabin, her thoughts wandering, and so much were the players engaged in their game that Paul passed them unperceived.

"Oh! Monsieur Paul, Monsieur Paul!" exclaimed Alice, at once observing her lover's pale looks. "What is the matter?"

"Oh! Mademoiselle," said Paul. "Have pity upon me."

The young girl startled; it was almost an avowal.

"Explain yourself," replied she, with interest; "explain yourself; what is the matter?"

"Oh! I require consolation. I wish to be allied to my father—to you; for I feel that a frightful fatality is overpowering me. Oh! prove to me that there is truth in life—that all is not false—

hood, hatred, and despair. Oh! love me; for pity's sake, love me, or I shall die."

This language was so different, and contrasted so widely with the general bearing of Paul, that Alice was affected almost to tears.

"What are the horrible thoughts that overwhelm you, M. Paul? you, so contented with the future—so sure of happiness."

"Yes, yes; I was so two hours ago. But now all has changed. It was he—he alone. Oh! what frightful power does that man possess?"

"But who are you speaking of, Paul?"

"Of Szaffie," replied the young man, with an accent of terror. Alice shuddered.

"Yes," said Paul. "It was he—it was Szaffie. That strange man is endowed with fatal eloquence. His words reached my heart with a piercing thrill, and they drove from my soul the counsels of my father—the hopes which my dying mother had inspired in me. His words spread over everything like a veil, and I remained at his side—lost, bewildered, listening to him with terror and avidity, wishing to fly from him, but unable; feeling the poniard reach my heart, but having not the courage to ward off the blow. But all this is false—it is a dream—a vision. It must be so. Happiness exists, for you are near me. Virtue exists, for I have found it in you, and in my father. Yes, yes: Szaffie deceived me. Did he not do so, Alice, when he told me that there was no happiness in this world. There would be abundance for me if—if you love me, Alice. I have no longer strength to conceal my passion. But you knew it—did you not? Oh! how I love you; you are not angry with me, for I am suffering. Take this ring, Alice. It is the last gift that my mother gave me. It is my most precious treasure, and ought it not to be yours if you love me."

"Alice, Alice," cried Madame de Bleipé, "come and decide between the commander and me."

"Paul, my lad," said the good Marquis, "you will give us your opinion too."

These words called Paul to himself. Alice, trembling, took the ring, placed it on her finger, cast an affectionate look upon Paul, and went into the grand cabin.

Night came; but Alice slept not. Her heart beat, and she felt a strange inexplicable sensation. It was a kind of anguish mingled with joy. Then she said to herself, in fear, "What a dreadful influence that man must possess. To produce such an effect, in so short a time, in the soul of Paul—that heart cultured by a father's love, and purified by the counsel of a dying mother. What power!"

CHAPTER XXXII.

LOVE AND HATRED.

How beautiful is night upon the stifled waves of the Mediterranean. Night! when the white sails of the vessel flutter in the expiring breeze; when the ship, like an ocean god, seems slumbering on the blue waters; when stars twinkle in the azure sky, like golden sparks falling from the firmament, with the moon in the distance, shedding forth her clear and pearly rays.

How I love the silence of these nights; how I love to hear the deep and melancholy murmurings of the sleeping waters; how I love the distant aspirations of the cachetot that comes, and plays upon the waves, and spouts forth brilliant streams of water covered with foam; how I love the harmonious sound of the ploughing of the vessel, feeble and soft noise, like that of dry leaves under the tender feet of a maiden.

But that lovelier still was Alice, at the poop of the vessel, clothed in white, alone, and motionless, in the midst of the transparent shades of the evening.

"Paul loves me," she said to herself; "he loves me; he has made the avowal, and this avowal makes me calm and thoughtful. To love—yes, to love. Do I, then, love him? Oh, yes; I think so, for he is so handsome, so good, so brave, so noble, and he loves his father so much. When he speaks to me his voice is so touching, so penetrating; and when he mentions his departed mother, he affects me with a soft and melancholy sadness. This is his mother's ring, and he gave me it, for he loves me, and I love him. Yes, I do love him; yet I thought the avowal caused a tumult in our bosoms, changed our life, our feelings, and our language; everything, even the air that we breathe, and nature with which we are surrounded. Still I do not feel any change in me—I am exactly as I was before. No change; no! I love him; yes, for him I have only happy desires. If I think of the future, it is to pray to God to render his days happy and prosperous. Then, yesterday, how I suffered when I saw him dejected and downcast by the influence of—"

Here Alice stopped, blushed, and became thoughtful. Then she added, "Yes, yes; I love him, for when contrasting him with others how different are my feelings. The young lieutenant, M. Merval, is as handsome as Paul—as brave as he; but how different is his heart—it is vulgar and common. To me it matters little what becomes of him. His voice is indifferent to me—but I love to hear Paul speak. M. Merval neither leaves regret nor soft recollections behind him, while Paul does. Oh, yes; to see Paul! to be near him! And as for—"

Here Alice stopped again, for, by an inexplicable fear, twice she shunned an idea that had involuntarily started in her mind.

"Well, after all," she said, surmounting an inward feeling of shame, "why do I shudder at that thought. He is a being that I detest; his sight makes me ill; his voice grates upon my ear; I hate *him*. Oh, yes: I wish I loved Paul as much as I hate him."

The cheeks of Alice were like crimson, and her respiration was protracted.

"Oh, yes," she continued; "hatred changes the heart more than love. It is the hatred that I have for him that has changed me. When I think of him, everything appears sad and mournful. Indeed, fearful and timid as I am, when I think of that man it is only to despise—to curse him. And what has he done to me? I do not know. But his looks annoy me; his cold politeness offends me. Then his sarcasms upon men and women, and his bitter jokes upon happiness and love! What is all that to me? And he wears such a severe expression in his countenance! I look at him, for I cannot help it, and his pale and sad countenance, since I first saw it, since I hated him—follows me everywhere.

"Yes, he was there—leaning upon that rope, when I first saw him. He appeared to be melancholy and pensive; he saluted me, and I shall never forget the expression of his large eyes when fixed upon me; never shall I forget the strange feeling which he inspired in me.

"Yes; and Paul, like me, was astonished at the strange and uncommon look of that man. Each day my hatred increased, and I would now give the half of my existence to leave this vessel, never to see him again. But could I forget him?"

Alice then fell into a profound reverie.

"Are you unwell, Mademoiselle?" said a soft voice.

Alice trembled. It was he—it was Szaffie. Her heart failed her, and she felt as if she was dying.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

DO YOU THINK THAT I AM HAPPY?

Alice, unable to overcome her emotion, supported herself against the bulwarks of the corvette.

"May I, Mademoiselle," said Szaffie, "offer you my arm?"

"No, no, Sir," said Alice, with an expression of fear; then she added, "A thousand thanks, Sir."

She wished to join her aunt. Impossible—she seemed nailed to the spot.

"I see, Mademoiselle," said Szaffie, with a melancholy air, "that my presence molests you, and that your dislike to me prevents you from accepting the slightest service on my part. I leave you; but allow me, Mademoiselle, to send some one to you, for you appear to be ill, and it would be painful for me to see you in want of those attentions which you will not accept because I offer them."

"Sir, I am better—much better. But what makes you think—"

"Think that you hate me, Alice," interrupted Szaffie. "A strange sympathy—a secret voice warns me that that sentiment is experienced by us both. So you see, Alice, that instinct does not deceive me."

The young girl thought she was dreaming. Szaffie called her Alice. Then he addressed her with that freedom of language which exists only after long intimacy, or after proofs of mutual affection. She did not know what to reply. She was troubled, and her heart beat with emotion.

Szaffie spoke again, and she listened attentively.

"I knew that you hated me, Alice, because I had no sooner set eyes on your face than I hated you."

Alice startled.

"Yes; because you brought cruelly to my recollection lost emotions; beliefs for ever destroyed; dreams of happiness and love that have perished. Yes, Alice, you seemed like the angel that the damned see in the depths of hell. Each day as your perfections—as your charms disclosed themselves, so in proportion did my hatred increase. Yes, I cursed you because I could no longer love."

Alice became pale.

"To love, Alice, two hearts must be alike in purity; the one worthy of the other—each filled with sentiments the most pure, and which, in clinging to each other, resemble the birds of heaven, that, leaving their nests, go elsewhere to find the same sun, the same perfumes, and the same flowers. But in my heart, Alice," he added, with a bitter smile, "you will only find hatred, contempt, and incredulity—in my heart, Alice, there is a frightful gulph. Poor angel! you would fall into it, with hope blasted, and phrenzied with despair."

Then, taking the hand of Alice, whose eyes were wet with tears, he continued, with a soft but penetrating voice, "But it is with joy and sadness that I think of the happiness that is in store for you. Yes, Alice, a soul exists—sister to your own—that will return you that love which you bestow. A being in the aurora of life like yourself, equally pure, confiding, and sensitive. Paul loves you, Alice; then love him—you must love him."

Alice shuddered.

"Ah, Alice, if fresh sorrows could find a place in my heart,

each day would add new ones; but no! my heart is full. Think, my sweet girl, what the grief must be of one who says, 'Behold this ineffable happiness experienced by another, not by me—the dream of my life—a dream which I now lack the power of indulging in.' Oh, Alice, if you suffered as I do, you would then understand my hatred!"

A tear fell upon the hand of Alice, who, scarcely able to breathe, cried out involuntarily, "And who told you that I was happy?"

She then burst into tears; her strength was exhausted. Madame de Pleiné appeared on deck, and Szaffie said coolly "I am afraid, madame, that your niece is indisposed."

"I am with you, I am with you," cried the worthy doctor; "but let us go below, for the air is too keen for you, Mademoiselle."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE BETROTHED.

Alice, hiding her tears, went below. The poor girl, telling her aunt that she wished to go to sleep for a short time, desired to be left alone.

"Oh, wretchedness! wretchedness is now my lot," said she. "What have I heard? It is impossible for him to love, and he tells me to love another. He cannot love me! Was it, then, my looks that divulged my love for him? Oh God! what will be my lot if I should love him? I will then be humiliated, repulsed, and despised. I must then fall at his feet, and call out, 'Mercy, mercy!'"

"If I love him—if I love him with all the strength of my soul; if, by some inexplicable influence, that sad and suffering heart attract me to it—Oh, could I but heal his wounds!—if there were as much love as pity in my heart—still he cannot love me. And if—but the very thought makes me blush—if, by a fatal contradiction, by the caprice of my destiny—I should love him because he cannot love me——"

"No, no; I am getting mad—Oh, God, pardon me! The soul—thy inexplicable creation—cannot be so base, so miserable. No; it is an error of imagination. I am ill—I have a fever—I am mad, mad, delirious."

"Oh, yes, Paul loves me, and he orders me to love him. Paul is so good, so noble, so candid. Paul, Paul, where art thou? I only love thee."

"Alice, Alice!" said a low voice.

The young girl startled. The voice came from the window, where Paul appeared.

"Oh, Paul," said she, running to him, "what brings you there?"

"Oh, Alice, ought I not to be here every instant when I am at liberty? Should I not be at the window whether you be here or not—for to me you are always here, and in this place my mind is filled with pleasing recollections."

"Did you hear me call you, Paul?"

"Is it true, then? Was I not mistaken? Was it, then, your voice that I heard?"

Saying so, he leaped into the cabin.

"Listen, Paul; you love me?"

"You have my mother's ring, Alice."

"I am worthy of it, Paul, for I love you—yes, I love you."

Paul fell at her feet.

"Listen, Paul," she said, with emotion. "Although my father's fortune is considerable, although we are both young, I am sure of obtaining his consent to our marriage. Your father then must ask my aunt's consent, and she will grant it. From that moment you will not leave me, for you will have a right to do so. We are betrothed; and you will always be with me—always by my side. Do you hear that, Paul? Will it be so?"

Paul's heart bounded with joy. His dream was realised. That adorable woman that he ought to love in the name of the virtues of his mother, was before him. It was Alice! Alice, who said to him, "I love thee; thou art my chosen one." She loved him, and had confessed her passion.

Paul replied not. On his knees, his hands clasped, he seemed to be praying; a deluge of tears bathed his cheeks; he muttered, "Oh, Alice!" then he added, "Oh, my mother, thou hast heard me!"

Alice, by this sudden act, thought she would extinguish the love she bore to Szaffie; for that avowal, she imagined, raised between him and her an insurmountable barrier. Betrothed, devoted to Paul, it would be criminal and infamous to retract; and she thought that it was impossible for her to go that length.

"You love me, Alice!" Paul exclaimed.

"Yes, I love you—I love none but you; and you love me. Oh, repeat that word again, that I may hear it. You can love me, can you not, Paul? Tell me also that I love you; for it is with my own accord that I have told you; therefore, should I be false, it would be infamous, Paul—yes, infamous."

"I do not understand you, Alice."

"No, I love you. Are you not the husband of my choice? Your mother and mine from above will bless our union. My own Paul—my good Paul."

Footsteps were heard; Paul kissed the hand of Alice, and disappeared through the port-hole.

"Now," said the young girl, "that thought will no longer disturb me. I am more tranquil—I will forget *him*."

Madame de Bleiné entered, and Alice said, "Oh, my dear aunt, I am very unwell."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE RAT OF THE HOLD.

Several days had elapsed since Alice had avowed her love to Paul, and she begged him not yet to speak to his father of their union.

Paul, according to her desire, left her not. He was always at her side, and delighted; he had entirely forgotten the words of Szaffie, for the joy that inundated his heart had effaced the cruel and sombre thoughts that for a moment clouded his soul.

Szaffie seldom appeared on deck, and was rarely in the commander's cabin. He shut himself up in his room, pretending that he was slightly indisposed, which circumstance delighted the old doctor, who was desirous of becoming better acquainted with Szaffie. But old Garnier's hope was deferred, for Szaffie would not receive his attentions.

Szaffie once approached Alice, and said, "I see, Alice, that thou art happy. Thou lovest him. Did I not advise thee? Is it not happiness?"

Then he walked away.

Alice replied not; she became pale, and said to herself, "He advised me! Does he think that it is because he told me that I love Paul? No; I love him, for he is good, brave, and generous. I love him, because that love to me is happiness."

Then, after a few minutes' silence, clasping her hands, she cried, her eyes looking upwards, "To die, to die."

And for the first time in her life, she found the attentions of Paul wearisome—that his presence constrained her; and she feigned indisposition, that she might remain undisturbed in her cabin.

"You are wrong," said the old doctor, "for we are going to have a dance this evening, and that will amuse you. This is a day consecrated to pleasure."

Alice listened, tried to smile, then went to her room.

This was, as the doctor said, a day devoted to pleasure; and one of the convincing proofs was the piercing shouts that proceeded from the fore part of the corvette.

"Mercy, mercy," cried a feeble voice.

"Take the cursed rat to the grindstone," vociferated fifty voices.

"Oh, you are hurting me!" said the thin voice, amidst sobs and tears.

"Why, hell-hound, do you come to wash your ugly mug with the other lads? What was it you were gnawing in the hold?"

"Oh! have pity on me. I will go below as soon as Master Buyk will allow me."

"It is not true," shouted a number of voices. "Let us try if scrubbing will have any effect upon him."

"Oh! what have I done to you?" cried the poor boy.

"You know well that you molest us, and we have a right to amuse ourselves; besides, we wish to know the colour that the skin of a rat becomes after it is well scrubbed."

This joke was received by all with loud acclamations, which drowned the plaintive voice of the poor boy.

Misery was twisting and turning in the arms of a number of sailors, who had nearly stripped him naked, and were preparing to rub him with sand and tow—not an uncommon operation inflicted on novices.

The poor lad was then stretched upon a sail.

"Oh! Parisian," cried the little wretch. "Oh! do not hurt me, and I will give you my bread and wine. That is everything I have, and I will give it all to you."

"You would—would you, cursed rat! Then you would prig the biscuits, and gnaw them in your hole."

Bursts of laughter ensued, and handfuls of dust were thrown at the poor creature, who shouted out, "Oh! you are blinding me. Mercy! mercy! What have I done to you for you to use me so?"

"Scrub him, scrub him," cried the Parisian, "then he will be red, for the marine rat, like the crab, becomes red in cooking."

Bursts of laughter accompanied this sally of wit; then they began to rub the body of poor Misery, with the tow, tar, and sand, imbibed in salt-water, which caused the most excruciating pain.

"Oh, let me alone! let me alone!" cried the poor boy.

"Yes, when you are washed, my famous rat."

"Oh, Parisian! Parisian! let me go! let me go! I will do everything you like. Oh! for pity's sake."

These words caused the men to rub with double vigour, amidst oaths and shouts of laughter.

"You will not let me go? Oh! if my mother was here—if my mother was not dead!" exclaimed the boy, while his features took a singular expression, and his frame shook convulsively.

"Ah, my mother! I am tortured! Come, mother; come and defend me!"

The sufferings were beyond the boy's strength, and reason gave way.

"There is no rat here, savages! Do you hear that? Ah! my mother comes! Yes; do you see her? You tear the flesh from my bones, but my mother is coming, and you will then suffer for what you have done."

Then the poor wretch burst into a fit of laughter,

"He is mad! Look at his eyes, Parisian! They are like fire!"

Misery had fallen into a fit, which cruel treatment had brought upon him.

His eyes sparkled, grew larger, became fixed; then a sardonic smile curled his pale lips.

The sailors were still holding him in their arms, but had ceased rubbing him.

Misery continued:—"My mother; it is I. Do you hear? It is your little son George, who is now called Misery. I know not wherefore; and they beat me all day long. You have come to me—have you not? and you have brought me clothes, for I am cold? and bread, for I am hungry? for they steal mine from me. Will you not warm me in your bed, by the side of the large fire-place? You will do so, mother; and then, in the mornings, you will give me the cakes that you used to make for your little George; and on Sundays you will make me pray to God, for I have forgotten how to pray. But no, no; you cannot come; you are dead, dead—like my father, who is dead. All are dead except your own little George; but they are killing him. Do you hear that, mother? they are sending me to you."

The poor lad shut his eyes.

The sailors looked at each other. Their conduct was not cold-blooded atrocity—it was brutish gaiety. They were playing with the lad as children play with birds, which they ultimately kill.

Those who held Misery had their eyes filled with tears. They at length seated him gently on the poop. This movement brought the lad partly to himself, although not entirely to his reason. He started up, fixed his eyes upon the sailors, and retreating, he shouted, with his feeble voice, "The rat has good teeth. He can gnaw; yes, he can gnaw the nut in the hold."

Saying this, he made his teeth rattle against each other with incredible velocity, then flew to the hold, and disappeared; when lost in darkness, he was still heard uttering these words:—"Gnaw! gnaw! yes, gnaw the nut! for the rat of the hold has good teeth!"

Although the poor creature was in a complete frenzy, still a fixed idea—an idea of vengeance—governed him, and for the execution of that idea alone it seemed as if he had preserved his reason.

Misery glided into the bread room, and approaching an empty

barrel, which he displaced, he squatted himself by the side of the corvette, and by means of a terebra and a saw, he succeeded in making a hole in the vessel about four feet long and two feet wide.

He worked hard for a considerable time, and while effecting his object, he muttered, "This is gnawing the nut."

When the thin sheet of iron that lined the outside of the vessel alone prevented the water from rushing in, Misery took a chisel; but he stopped suddenly. The thought of the evening ball struck him, and he determined on waiting till then.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE BALL.

In the evening the sailors, half-drunk, gay, and noisy, mounted the deck, while two Bretons of Phœrma! spouted forth a kind of horn music, which was anything but harmonious. At the ball naval hierarchy had disappeared, and the powder-monkey figured face to face with the quarter-master, who had often chastised him; novices received attentions from the tar with face blackened by sun and storm; and La Joie, himself, with singular gravity, moved his long legs, perhaps more comically than gracefully, before Master Bouquin, whom he had chosen for his partner, and whom, in a fit of gaiety, he styled Madame Bouquin. A few of the old fellows, old firebrands, who no longer cared about the dance, or who could not find partners to their liking, squatted themselves upon the sails, chatting, with pipes in their mouths, and sending forth astonishing puffs of tobacco both from their mouths and nostrils.

The good commander smiled at this lively picture, was contented at the sight of the gaiety of those brave fellows, and would have been happy himself had it not been for his cursed uniform.

"I'll wager you, Pierre," said old Garnier to the lieutenant, "that I will get the purser to dance."

"You are not gallant, doctor," said Madame de Bleiné.

"Oh! Madame, I am too old; besides, I leave that honour to the commander, or to the first lieutenant."

"You see, commander," said Madame de Bleine, "that we must envy the happiness of the doctor, for if power has charms, it has also its *ennui*."

"Madame," replied the Marquis, in summoning up all his gallantry of the last century, "in waiting for the *ennui* let us enjoy the charms."

Saying this he took hold of the lady's hand.

"What folly, commander, to dance at our age."

"The heart never grows old," replied the spirited ex-tobacconist.

"The heart, commander—the heart! This is a matter of the legs, commander."

"Yes, but you can give heart to the legs," said the Marquis, piquantly; for the scene had brought to his recollection the happy days of the Marshal de Mirepoix.

"Still, commander, I must refuse; besides, my niece is ill."

"Not at all," said the doctor. "I have just left the commander's cabin, and on my way I listened at her door. I assure you she is sleeping soundly. So, Madame, no excuses. Purser, will you do me the honour of dancing a quadrille with me?"

"What! you're joking," said the purser.

"Not at all. We must be the commander's and madame's *vis-à-vis*."

"Let me see," said M. Merval. "If Mademoiselle Alice was here."

"You have hit it," said the doctor, looking round for Paul.

At this moment the discordant music ceased, the dancers drew breath, and a sudden silence, which occasionally takes place in the most tumultuous assemblages ensued.

A sudden burst of laughter was heard, which seemed to come from the heavens; then these words fell from above:—"Ah! ah! ah! the rat has good teeth! yes, he has gnawed—gnawed. Beware of the leak! The rat has good teeth!"

The officers and men stared at each other, stupified, all trying to find out where the strange voice came from.

A plunge was heard in the water. The lieutenant ran to the side of the vessel, looked attentively, and shouted, "A man overboard;" then immediately afterwards, he added, with the greatest coolness, "All hands to the pumps."

It is impossible to describe the effect of these words, which were repeated from mouth to mouth.

"To the pumps! to the pumps!" shouted the lieutenant. "Do you wish to perish without making an effort to escape death?"

These words were hardly pronounced, when Master Buyk appeared on deck, crying, "There are four feet of water in the hold, and it's filling rapidly."

"All hands to the pumps. Let the ship's boats be lowered, and death to the first that attempts to abandon the vessel before his turn."

That well-known voice, in conjunction with the whistle of La Joie, established immediate order. The pumps were put into action, and the boats were lowered. At that moment Paul was leaving the deck, when his father shouted, "To your post, midshipman."

"But, Alice, father!"

"To your post, sir," repeated Pierre, with a voice of thunder.

Paul dared not reply; accustomed to passive obedience, he ran to his post. On his way he saw Madame de Bleiné trying to break through the sailors, who, hanging by the ropes of the pumps, barred her passage.

"You cannot go that way, Madame," said he.

"In the name of heaven, my niece—my niece!"

"She is in safety, Madame. If the corvette sink, the females will be saved first."

"Let me see her! let me see her!"

"Impossible, Madame! you would hinder these men, on whose energy alone depend our lives. Courage, my brave fellows!" he added, at the same time setting a noble example.

The lieutenant, his trumpet in his hand, was calm and composed in the midst of that frightful danger. From time to time he leant over the bulwarks to see the progress of the water, then he gave the necessary orders to prevent confusion.

That admirable crew, inured by him to discipline, was as calm, where life depended, as if it had been engaged in some simple exercise.

The lieutenant, stimulating the men, had no time to look after the commander, who, in a dreadful state of terror, no sooner saw the yawl lowered, than he strode towards it with all possible speed.

The keen eye of Pierre lighted upon the ex-tobacconist. He sprang forward, barred the passage of the Marquis, and guessing his intent, demanded, in a deep voice, "Where are you going, sir?"

"To save myself. Leave me alone. The vessel's sinking."

"Miserable wretch!" cried Pierre, forcing him back.

"I am your commander," said the Marquis, "and I order you to let me go."

"Are you not aware, poltroon, that he who abandons the vessel before the women and lads are saved, is punished by death. Are you not aware that the commander is the last—do you hear me—the last who leaves his vessel."

"But I don't wish to die. Oh, no! I am afraid. There; I am unworthy of being commander. I give up my commission. Now let me save myself."

Here the ex-tobacconist struggled in the hands of Pierre, who was trembling lest the crew might perceive what was going on.

"*Sauve qui peut*," shouted the Marquis, in despair, as the vessel inclined a little, and appeared to be sinking.

"Hold your tongue," cried Pierre, clapping his hands upon the Marquis's mouth. "Hold your tongue, poltroon. That cowardly cry is always punished by death; and it shall be so,

for I gave my word that you should not disgrace your epaulettes."

Saying this, Pierre, in fury, drew his poniard, and struck the commander, but happily, through the intervention of La Joie, the blade only ruffled the skin of the old man.

"Lieutenant! lieutenant!" cried La Joie, thrusting himself between them.

"The scoundrel wants to assassinate me," said the Marquis, pale and trembling.

Pierre, recovering himself, said, with an apparent accent of rage, "Why, commander, do you not wish to save my son, and order him to get into the yawl?"

By this subterfuge—by expressing a feeling so natural to a father, Pierre saved the honour of his commander.

"But you know, lieutenant," said La Joie, still holding Pierre, "that the officers embark the last, and M. Paul is an officer."

"You may withdraw now, La Joie; my love for my son made me forget myself. I am guilty, commander, and I resign myself to my fate. There's my poniard."

The Marquis, stupefied, took hold of the poniard, without knowing what he did.

Master Bouquin here came up breathless, saying, "Commander, the pumps can scarcely clear the water. Master Buyk has been lowered, and is now trying to place a piece of lead upon the hole."

"Listen to the orders of your commander," replied Pierre, coldly. "M. Merval, see to the pumps being vigorously worked. Let the preparations be continued, that were begun, to lower the ship's boats, M. Bidaud. Go to the hold, and see how much the water has gained, Master Bouquin; and let order be kept; and you, master caulker, get the carpenter in readiness to stop the leak."

These orders, precise and exact, were given, without evincing the slightest emotion, in Pierre's ordinary voice. The danger, however, was imminent.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE SHIPWRECK.

After having wept a long time—being charmed, haunted by the recollections of Szaffie, and cursing the love that she felt for him, Alice, overwhelmed with grief, broken in spirits, invoked death.

Awoke by the tumult that reigned on deck, she heard these frightful words, "The corvette is sinking! We shall perish."

"Oh, God! what is the matter?" she cried, rising up in bed.

The door opened.

"Oh! aunt, aunt," she said, in terror, "how glad I am that you are come."

It was Szaffie, who entered, and shut the door after him.

"We are lost, Alice," he said; "before ten minutes we shall be buried in the deep."

"What do you say?"

"A leak has sprung, Alice. We shall perish. Look!"

Alice turned her eyes towards the window, and saw from the height of the water that the vessel had sunk more than a foot, and was still sinking.

"It is true, then, that we are going to die," said Alice, pensively; her cheeks became purple, and a light gleamed from her moistened eyes. "To die!" she added, "Heaven, then, has heard me."

Szaffie approached her, and taking her burning hands in his, said, "To die near thee, Alice! How gladly do I yield up my life!"

At this moment a frightful shriek was heard upon deck, and the vessel, sinking, caused the water to reach the edge of the cabin-windows.

"Dost thou hear that, Alice?" said he, pressing the delicate form of the fair girl to his bosom.

"Oh, yes, Szaffie; I am going to die—and with you?"

"Yes, with me, Alice!" said Szaffie, placing his mouth upon the rosy lips of the young girl.

That touch, all thrilling and electrical, produced a swimming in the head, and Alice fell, as if intoxicated, into the arms of Szaffie.

"Oh, happy, happy death!" she murmured, "if it only gives me time to tell you that I love you, Szaffie; that I love you, who can no longer love. On the brink of death we can ~~make~~ make that avowal without degradation—can we not, Szaffie?"

"Oh, Alice!" he exclaimed, kissing her fondly, "love, happiness, shall have killed us before we are engulfed in the deep."

"Yes; and do you think that I can, before death, make you forget one of your pangs? Can I alleviate the sufferings of him—of you, Szaffie, whom I adore, and whom I thought I hated. Hate you—you, my demon and my angel—you, my tears and my smiles. Oh, say to me that you now suffer no longer; say that you forgive me for my hatred. But it was not hatred, it was love. My life, my soul, my Szaffie, it was love. Do you hear that—love, love!"

"Mine, too, my Alice; my hatred also was love; it was

passion at not being able to devour thy eyes, thy mouth, thy—
all, all, thee entire, my Alice.”

The young girl, intoxicated, quivered in the passionate embraces of Szaffie.

“Oh, Szaffie,” she muttered, almost breathless, “you speak truly. I will die before the water reaches me. Have mercy, oh, heaven!”

“Yes, Alice; thank both heaven and hell.”

“Heaven and hell. That is you, my Szaffie; for you fill me with love, still you love not. What does it matter? I love you, and I shall die with you. Oh! I should like to die for you. Do you wish me to lose myself for ever for you? Do you wish me to blaspheme God at this terrible moment? Do you wish me to lose myself to all eternity? Now, Szaffie, do you think that I love you?”

“Yes,” said Szaffie, with a frightful expression of irony, “blaspheme, blaspheme!”

At this moment, a gush of water entered the cabin by the port-hole.

“Oh, Szaffie!” cried Alice, in fright, and throwing her arms round his neck, and pressing her lips to his, she fell into a nervous fit, and fainted.

Szaffie, carrying her on deck, said coolly to himself, “I trust we run no danger; the lieutenant, at least, assured me there was none, before I went below.” Then, looking at the young girl, he added, with a smile, “Another, who, on coming to herself, will no longer believe in love—*she will see clearly!* How much grief do I spare her! Undeceived so young, what coquetry is in store for her, if she understand her position! But where can I find Madame Bleiné, that I may deliver up this precious burden?”

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE LOG-BOOK.

When Szaffie went to Alice, the pumps had begun to act freely, for by bearing the vessel down on one side, the carpenter succeeded in closing up the leak. At the expiration of an hour, quietness and order were established on board the Salamander, and the worthy corvette ploughed her way admirably through the waves. Pierre gave instructions how to act, and descended to the commander's cabin.

“Pardon me, sir,” said Pierre, “for the criminal act which I was about to commit, but you drove me to it.”

The good Marquis rose, and replied, "Lieutenant, you ought, at least, to have had respect for my grey hairs—only for my grey hairs; for I feel that, as commander, I deserve your contempt, and that you do everything in your power to gloss over my weakness in the eyes of the crew. I know, thanks to you, that I am looked upon as one who knows his duty; and that even when my cowardice had provoked you, you sacrificed yourself for me. I know all that, my friend, therefore I ought to excuse you in an excited moment. Give me your hand, and let us say no more about it."

"Indeed, sir!" said Pierre, pressing the Marquis's hand, "you do not know what you have done."

"No, my friend; what is it? tell me."

"Through you, my poor boy, Paul, will soon be fatherless."

"Good God! explain yourself!"

"Read this," said Pierre, handing the Marquis a paper.

The commander took it, and read as follows:—

"An officer, who, in battle, or during shipwreck, refuses to execute the orders of his commander; an officer, who raises his arm against his commander, will be——"

The Marquis stopped, became pale, and leaned upon his chair for support. Pierre took the paper, and continued, without emotion—

"That officer will be punished by death." Then, placing it upon the table, he added, "You see, sir, the law is explicit in this respect. I raised my poniard against you; in a word, I wished to assassinate you before the crew, at one of those moments when the most rigid, the most absolute discipline should reign on board. I repeat the law is formal—Death is the punishment."

"It is impossible! No one but La Joie saw you. Besides, I shall not accuse you."

"All passed before the eyes of the crew. If you were not to accuse me the public would. So, sir, I will deliver myself up as prisoner."

"And I, sir," said the Marquis, warmly, "shall appeal to the council, and will state that all happened because I had conducted myself as a coward, by wishing to abandon my vessel, and that my lieutenant, for my honour, opposed me; it is I, then, who deserve death. It is true that I am neither accustomed to fire nor water; it is true that I am afraid of a bullet—that I fear shipwreck; but it will never be said that I was base enough to allow a brave seaman, a father, to suffer death for my cowardice."

Here the good old man, in tears, threw himself into the arms of his lieutenant, who, much affected, replied, "Be calm, commander; you are good and sensible, and possess qualities which I respect. In every position, except that of captain of a frigate,

loved and honoured. Unfortunately the deed is done, and there is only one remedy left; but I swear, before God, that when my last moment arrives, I will not bear the least hatred towards you."

"My God! my God!" said the Marquis, the tears streaming down his furrowed cheeks. "Oh, wretchedness! wretchedness! But I tell you," he added, wiping his face, "that it will not be so—that it cannot be so."

Pierre, without replying, took the log-book, and wrote as follows:—"Pierre Huet, aged forty years, born at Quimperlé, chevalier of the legion of honour, embarked as my lieutenant on board his majesty's corvette, the Salamander. In a moment of anger, he raised his poniard against me, commander of the said vessel, in the exercise of my duty. This deed was committed because I refused to give an order to save his son, who is midshipman on board. I, therefore, convoke to-morrow a council of war, in order to take into consideration this grave act, and to adopt adequate measures thereupon. The said Pierre Huet previously failed in discipline, having interrupted my commands before the crew. In the meantime I order the said Pierre Huet to discontinue his functions, and to be retained prisoner in his room until further orders.

"Drawn up on board the Salamander, &c.

"Signed by the captain of the frigate, commanding the corvette of his majesty."

Pierre rose, and presenting the log-book to the commander, said, "Sign this, sir. I have drawn it out myself, because you do not know the form of this declaration."

The Marquis had no sooner read it than he cried out, "Never! never!"

"Your abstaining from doing so is useless, for I will order Bidaud to copy it into the officer's log-book, with which yours must correspond."

"Then," said the Marquis, "I will write the facts beneath."

"Sir," cried Pierre, becoming red from anger; "would you dare to relate an act of the most unheard-of cowardice in one of the log-books of the French navy? Do you know that they are historical records?"

"Then why insert a falsehood into one of them?"

"That lie does not dishonour me. Any one may read, without a feeling of indignation, 'Pierre Huet, blinded by his love for his son, forgot himself so far as to strike his commander. Death was his punishment, and he died bravely;' but no one shall ever read, 'A commander of the French navy was the first and only one who cried out '*Sauve qui peut*' on board his majesty's vessel.' No, no," he added, in passion, "may the lightning blast me if you do not sign this without delay. Remember you are now arguing with one condemned to death. Sign! I am tired of thus haranguing."

The commander took up the pen, and, in the midst of tears, subscribed his name.

"Very good," said Pierre. "Now let me ask a favour of you. Keep my son in ignorance of what has passed; his age prevents him from taking part in the council, and I can rely on the crew,—on my brave firebrands. The poor lad will not know anything till we reach Smyrna, where a council will be assembled to pass sentence upon me. One word more, commander. Since I was fifteen I have been the support of a lame sailor, a brave and honest man, who has only me in the world to look after him. His name is Gratien, and lives at Brest. Promise to fill my place in regard to him, for without you do so he would die of hunger. I see you consent. Adieu, then, commander. I will go to my cabin, where I will tell Paul that, for failing in discipline, you have ordered me to be confined. M. Bidaud will manage the vessel. I think he is competent."

Pierre left, and the Marquis remained plunged in the most gloomy reflections.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

PRESENTIMENT.

Behold us once more on our route, my dear and worthy Salamander. Thou hast been, it is true, delayed on thy voyage, by the design of Misery.

Poor Misery! sleep in peace in thy transparent sepulchre! Thy idea was good; but, child-like, thou wert in too great haste to announce the deed. Two minutes more, and thy project would have succeeded, even to thy heart's content. Why didst thou throw thyself into the sea? Why not wait patiently, and keep thy place on the truck of the main-mast?

By degrees thou wouldst have seen the corvette sink, and those perish who had beaten thee so often. Youth, love, beauty, glory, and genius, all would have perished at thy feet? and thou, whom all despised—thou, a powder-monkey, yet a giant—wouldst have contemplated that long and disastrous agony, and wouldst have seen them by degrees engulfed in the waters. To think that thou hast unwittingly sacrificed all these advantages for the pleasure of bounding from the truck of the main-mast!



Glide smoothly on, worthy Salamander, for, with a favourable breeze, thou approachest the African coast.

Who would think, on seeing thee so quiet, so calm, that within thy bosom were fermenting passions, breaking hearts, and floods of tears! Yet all this does not detract from thy elegant appearance, the symmetry of thy form, the beauty of thy sails!

So, perhaps, this world in miniature, which a few days ago was so full of life, so loving, has undergone a change, and devotedness and friendship has given place to cries of agony and despair! Perhaps the soft words that were whispered in the ear—those protestations of love, are changed into crime and bitter sarcasm, and galling deceit.

But what am I saying, my worthy Salamander? Perhaps, on the contrary, a pure and radiant sun has arisen instead of this funereal star of night—a bright sparkling sun that casts upon the waters a thousand brilliant reflections. For, as Paul said to Szaffie, “All is not winter and darkness. There is a spring, aye, and a summer too.”

For though Alice was still a prey to the nervous and violent spasms which affected her since Szaffie bore her dying to the battery, and confided her to her aunt; though Alice, not having recovered her reason, startled and laughed in delirium; though Paul, restraining his breath, with tears in his eyes, passed the long day and night at her door, listening attentively—his heart breaking at each convulsive shriek uttered by the unfortunate girl—for, according to her promise, she was his betrothed, and he the lover of her choice; though Pierre Huet, alone in his cabin, his head resting on one hand, was thinking that in a month he would be shot as a criminal because his commander had conducted himself as a coward; though the poor Marquis with horror contemplated his position—himself a good-hearted man, free from malice—being the involuntary cause of the death of his lieutenant, whom he loved and respected; though the crew, mute and sad, appeared horror-struck at the blow that awaited Pierre—Pierre whom the sailors pitied, but could not excuse—so much, thanks to his efforts, had the lieutenant instilled a respect for subordination into the minds of the crew; though those brave sailors looked with an eye of interest on Paul, and stopped their conversation on seeing him approached, for the poor lad was the only one on board who was ignorant of the punishment that awaited his father; though the worthy old Garnier, in lavishing his paternal solicitude upon Mademoiselle Bleiné, said to himself, “It is strange, and anything but clear. Pierre Huet to raise his hand against his commander! Impossible! Still he was seen doing so. Poor, poor Pierre! who would have thought that your end would be so! Shot like a dog?” Though the purser, Merval, and Bidaud, sympathising in the general grief, were sad and morose; though, in fact, so many dark and dismal af-

fictions affected the gaiety of the interior of the Salamander, once so joyful;—still Szaffie was cold and impassable, walking up and down, and casting his eagle eye upon all.

As he, in his hatred, engrossed the human race, all that directly or indirectly afflicted man, created in him joy, and afforded him a subject for study.

I do not know by what infernal foresight he anticipated a series of frightful events. The sky was black and cloudy, the wind began to blow, and the sea to moan.

As tigers, which an inconceivable instinct guides, and draws them to the abodes of the dying, Szaffie walked upon the deck of the corvette with funereal thoughts, and dark images flitting across his mind.

He was pale, and a sardonic smile played upon his thin red lips.

“I never believed in presentiments,” said he, “but I feel assured that some dreadful catastrophe is about to happen. Strange,—I experience a singular, painful sensation, for which I cannot account——

“If I am about to die! To die already! Frightful thought! Oh, no! no! I rely on my star,” he added, laughing, “and Satan may weep, as the good people say.”

CHAPTER XL.

THEORY.

It blew a north gale—the sky was dark—the bosom of the sea was ruffled—and the wind wafted the long brown locks of Paul, who, leaning against the side of the vessel, appeared lost in painful reflections. His countenance, ordinarily ruddy, calm, and smiling, was deathly pale; tears streamed down his cheeks, and his eyes were fixed on a ring that he held in his hand.

It was his mother's, which he gave to Alice, and which she had returned, saying, “I am no longer worthy of you—forget me.”

Behind Paul was Szaffie, who stood contemplating him in silence.

He at length approached him, and said, “What is the matter with you, Paul? You appear overwhelmed in grief.”

Paul, startled, hid his ring, and replied, “Nothing, sir—nothing.”

“Your face, however, betokens the contrary. Is it because the commander has punished your father? Such, Paul, is the

result of naval hierarchy. Cowards to punish the brave, is quite in keeping. Your father sacrificed himself for that old dotard, and as a recompense he may lose his life. But all this is the natural occurrences attendant on man, Paul."

"It is true, sir; vice, crime, and infamy, are the only things which deceive not; for you will always find them as they are represented."

"What, Paul? what is the meaning of this? Wisdom has been indulgent with you since our last conversation."

"Oh, I now," said Paul, with a bitter laugh, "understand all that you told me. Yes; I begin to doubt everything—even myself."

"That is a terrible step, Paul."

"Yes; to doubt everything, sir: to ask myself if it is not possible to break an oath made over the ashes of the dead—an oath the most sacred. But tell me, you who have had experience, is it not enough for a woman to know that her lover is devoted to her, lives only for her, and sees in her his future hopes, his future bliss? Does she ask more? Is that not enough? Tell me, I beseech you."

"Listen, Paul. Suppose a man of elevated thoughts—a man of genius—a man physically and morally beautiful—with high and sublime thoughts. Well, Paul?"

"Alas, sir! must one possess all that to be loved?"

"If that, you would then see yourself sacrificed for a degraded being, stupid and deformed."

"Oh, sir, you rail; you are cruelly sarcastic."

"I speak the truth, Paul. The passions of mankind cease not in possession; the activity of the mind relaxes not in the possession of an ideal object. Thus, Paul, a woman meeting perfection rests not satisfied—she goes to the opposite, and seeks the contrast. Have you read the history of the wife of Joconde, Paul?"

"No, sir."

"Well, Joconde was a rich prince—handsome, amiable, and intellectual. Going on an excursion, he left his wife, full of love for him, with eyes wet with tears, and cheeks moistened with kisses. He returned sooner than was expected, and found her in bed with a foot-man, ugly and deformed, almost in the extreme."

"Oh, horrible! horrible!" said Paul, hiding his face in his hands.

"And the same applies to moral deformity."

"In the name of heaven, what must we do? what must we believe, then?"

"There is an old Hindoo song that says, 'Expect everything, and be astonished at nothing.'"

"But that is to doubt—that is incredulity, which gnaws the heart."

"Yes, Paul, whilst the heart is green; but when the heart is withered, dried up, dead, insensible, and cold to everything, it rejoices at the deceptions of the world."

"This is infamous," cried Paul. "To be loved, is virtue and honour not essential. To love, is corruption requisite?"

"Yes, Paul; vice pleases woman."

"So," demanded Paul, with anxiety, "to be happy with them—to——"

"Ah, Paul, you ask too much—you ask that which exists not. True happiness is negative—is moral insensibility. So you must get rid of quickly—it matters not how—all superfluous passions or delights that end in vexation."

"But, in the name of heaven, what is there that remains?"

"Gratifications, as long as there are senses to gratify; and when there are none left, to pass the time in analysing those inexplicable beings, and making them subject to your will."

It is difficult to describe the state of Paul's mind. For the second time, that deplorable being fascinated him by his infernal influence; and what caused Paul to feel more forcibly those frightful paradoxes, was the thought—a vague suspicion—an indefinable instinct—that told him, from the conduct of Alice, that such a system existed. So lost, bewildered, he tried a last resort, with that cold rage which a gambler, with his last guinea, stakes, as it were, his life upon a card.

"Sir," said he, with a deep voice, "let us waive general things, and speak of personalities. I love a young girl, sir—handsome, pure, and chaste. I love her; yes, I love her, with honour and respect; for I do so in the name of my mother, who is now no more. Do you understand that, sir; in the name of the virtues of my mother. One day I suffered much, and I longed to open my heart, that I might receive consolation. I went to my father, but he would not see me; I then ran to her I loved; you know that when in affliction we desire to be loved. In my grief I unwittingly avowed my passion. She was not angry; she repulsed me not. On the contrary, a few days afterwards, she said, 'Paul, I love you; you are the chosen of my heart, and, in the name of this ring—your mother's, I vow, before God, that you only shall be my husband—that from this day I consider myself your betrothed. So, Paul, were I to deceive you, I should consider it an act of infamy.'"

Paul hid his face in his hands.

"Well, Paul," said Szaffie, coldly; "Alice returned your ring, saying, 'Paul, forget me.'"

Paul started, as if surprised by the bite of a serpent.

"You know it."

"Yes. Did I not tell you that such is the heart of woman? Paul, you are young, confiding, and have a noble soul. You believe in everything—you admire everything; but there is a

man here who can find no consolation, who believes in nothing, who cannot love any one, but who hates, with an implacable hatred, the human race."

Here Szaffie raised himself in pride, as he divulged his odious character.

"And you thought you were loved, Paul—loved, when there was at your elbow a man corrupted and seared to the heart. You thought you were loved by a woman who had for choice an angel or a demon."

"My God!" cried Paul. "My head swims. What do you say? Who is this man? Who is this demon?"

"I, Paul."

"You!" exclaimed Paul, recoiling; then springing forward, and seizing Szaffie by the arm, he cried, "Thou liest, or, if it is true, I shall kill thee."

"Child," said Szaffie, disengaging himself, "I instruct you, I enlighten you, and I even give you example with precept; and you would kill your benefactor. Some one comes; be calm: consider the reputation of *my* Alice."

Szaffie then entered the commander's cabin.

CHAPTER XL

INCERTITUDE.

"Commander," said old Bidaud, "according to my calculation, we are fifteen leagues from the Terim Sands."

"And according to mine," said Merval, "we are only two."

"The devil take the lieutenant for forcing me to confine him!" thought the worthy Marquis.

"What do you say, commander?"

"My calculation—stop, stop a little."

"Here is your chart, commander. Will you look at it?"

"No, no," said the Marquis. "My calculation agrees with M. Bidaud. Yes, yes; perfectly agrees."

"He is the oldest," thought the commander, "and therefore ought to be the wisest of the two."

"So, commander," demanded old Bidaud, "you approve of the route taken."

"Yes, my friend."

"That's enough," said Merval, retiring.

It was at this moment that Szaffie entered the commander's cabin.

"Good morning, commander."

"Good morning, my dear sir."

"How is Mademoiselle Bleiné?" demanded Szaffie. "Is she better?"

"The doctor says that the nervous irritation has almost subsided. I suppose it was fright. She seems very grateful for the service that you rendered her, for in her delirium she is always speaking of you. Without you she might have been drowned in her cabin. A good action, M. Szaffie, is never thrown away on a young girl."

"You are right, commander; but I hear a noise in her cabin."

"It is probably Madame de Bleiné, as her niece intends leaving her room to-day."

Alice, pale and suffering, one arm leaning upon old Garnier, the other on her aunt, entered.

"Softly, softly," said the doctor; "you are still weak, mademoiselle, and—"

Alice shrieked. Her eyes had fallen upon Szaffie.

Madame de Bleiné looked up, and seeing Szaffie, said, "Oh, sir! your presence has affected my poor Alice."

"I will retire, madame."

"Oh, no, sir. I owe you much, for she is indebted to you for the help which you afforded her. It is only the first emotion, which she has now overcome."

Alice, recovering herself, looked round for Szaffie; then she fixed her eyes upon him with that admirable expression of sadness and of love which reveals the feelings of the heart.

Szaffie, turning away his eyes, approached her, and asked her, in coldness, and with indifference, how she was.

"Almost well," said the doctor. "It was only a nervous attack, which has left her somewhat weak; but that's all. Excuse me, ladies. I must be off to my lads, for they expect me."

Saying this, the good doctor hurried away.

"Ah!" cried the Marquis; "everything is going on well. We shall soon be at Smyrna. Come, Madame de Bleiné, let us have our accustomed game at draughts. We have been prevented from doing so lately."

"Go, aunt," said Alice, seeing Madame de Bleiné hesitate. "I am pretty well. I will remain here. I can see and hear you, and if I want anything I will call you."

Madame de Bleiné entered the grand cabin, and Szaffie remained alone with Alice.

"Oh, Szaffie!" said the young girl, hiding her face in her hands.

"Are you ill, mademoiselle?" he demanded, with heartless coldness.

"You ask me that, Szaffie!" said Alice, with emotion. "What remains for me now but dishonour?"

"Do you not find, mademoiselle, that in the heart of woman love only holds a secondary place. First, virtue, then seemliness; duty, then love; and still they call this love dishonour. Indeed, woman employs that which is most keen in the soul, not to love; no, but in organising her passions, in arranging a convenient and discreet love, a tranquil affection, which follows in its train after duty or pleasure. There is a day for this—an hour for that. We read in her moments—At such an hour the duties of wife or of daughter neglected. That done, she begins to adore her husband, or to say, 'Mother, bless thy daughter.'"

Alice thought she was dreaming. That cold raillery astounded her, and she remained mute.

"For my part," continued Szaffie, "if I were loved by a woman, I should like nothing to go before her love for me. That love must be avowed openly, whether a girl or a wife, it matters not. She must, for that love, sacrifice reputation—aye, virtue."

"Oh, God! Szaffie," said Alice; "and is it thus that I must love you?"

"Yes," replied Szaffie, with an expression of raillery.

"Indeed! Then thus I love you," said Alice, her eyes filling with tears. "Yes; if you wish it I will proclaim it to the world. I will say that I love you—that I love only you; that I have sacrificed honour—all for you; and that now my love is my virtue. Yes, I will say that I am proud of being happy for you, and to be despised for you."

She seized the hand of Szaffie, which she wished to kiss, but he drew it away.

"And who told you that you would be loved—that you are loved," demanded he, in irony.

"Oh, Szaffie! that instinct which tells us that our love is mutual. Love told me so; love and the recollection of my fault; no, no, Szaffie—I mean my bliss, my good fortune."

"But love deceives you, young girl."

"I do not understand you," said Alice, trembling.

"Well, understand that—"

The door of the commander's cabin was opened violently, and the lieutenant appeared.

"Hell and fury!" shouted Pierre. "Bidaud, the cursed fool, has made a wrong calculation. We are upon the Terim Sands. Your chart, commander. Quick, quick!"

Pierre, without replying to the interrogations of the Marquis, Alice, and Szaffie, seized the telescope, and hurried upon deck.

Pierre, after the catastrophe with the Marquis, believing in Bidaud's capability, confided to him the charge of the vessel; but this officer, through ignorance, or a mistake in his calculations, thought he was at a much greater distance from the Terim Sands. Nevertheless, for two or three hours the colour

of the water had changed, and the long grass that floated here and there showed that they were sailing upon shallow water.

Paul was roused from the stupor into which the conversation of Szaffie had plunged him, by La Joie, who, touching his arm, said, "Monsieur Paul, I have been examining my chart, and it tells me that we are running on the Terim Sands. Look at the water and the grass. By heavens, Paul! the lieutenant would be better here than in his cabin."

Paul looked at the water, and ran to his father, who, frightened, rushed upon deck, to assure himself of the position of the vessel.

By his order Bouquin heaved the lead. The greatest silence reigned on board, for on that answer rested the fate of the crew.

"Well," demanded Pierre, with anxiety; "how much do you make it?"

"Eighteen fathoms, lieutenant," replied Bouquin, drawing up the lead.

An expression of grief and anxiety passed across the countenance of the lieutenant, who leapt upon the quarter-deck, and with his accustomed cool and brief commands, shouted out, "Luff, luff. Now, quarter-master, try the lead."

"Fifteen fathoms, lieutenant."

"Still to the wind," cried he, with energy. Then fixing his eyes upon the rigging, he added, "Helm aport; tack aboard."

The lead was again tried, and there were scarcely five fathoms of water.

The vessel was on the Terim Sands. It was too late.

CHAPTER XLII.

THE SAND BANK.

At the first heave which the vessel gave upon the sand bank, the crew uttered a shriek of astonishment; at the second, all was silent; at the third, a deep groan was heard; but there was hope in that long sigh. At the fourth heave, when the Salamander stopped in the midst of her course and creaked in every timber, then a cry was heard, a loud, piercing cry, which swelled above the noise of the waves that lashed the stern of the vessel.

Then the crew was mute, for that shriek was the cry of instinct that predominated over habitude and will. That cry, made by man, not the mariner, was the last expression of nature, uttered in the midst of the most perilous danger, which that circumstance presaged.

The crew again became calm; the whistle of *La Joie* was heard, and each man was seen at his post, without fearing, yet without despising the danger. All looked anxiously for the lieutenant, who was in the commander's cabin, where Alice and her aunt were in a state of stupor difficult to describe.

"Ladies," said Pierre, "all is not yet lost, but we have much to fear. Be so kind as to accompany the doctor, who will look to your safety. And you," he added, addressing Szaffie, "a man of courage, cannot but be useful in such a circumstance. Will you favour me, then, by going on deck?"

"Certainly, sir; only allow me to take my papers with me."

He entered his cabin, took his purse and a small box, then went on deck.

Pierre was left alone with the commander, who was pale and agitated.

"Sir," said Pierre, "your ignorance in giving your opinion in favour of Bidaud has caused the loss of the vessel. The route that Merval suggested was the proper one. Ah, sir! the parties through whom you were appointed may be sorry for their imprudence. But the evil is done, and as I have no inclination to renew the scene of the other day, you shall not leave your cabin. I will say that at the last shock that the vessel received, you were struck upon the head by something falling, and therefore cannot appear on deck."

"Are we, then, lost, lieutenant?"

"It is probable. But as you are afraid to go on deck, I will lock you in your cabin. When all have left the vessel, except myself, I will come for you, and we will embark the last, according to order."

"But, my God!" exclaimed the Marquis, "if—"

Pierre was out of the cabin, and the Marquis heard the turning of the locks of the different doors.

When Pierre again appeared on deck, he was clothed in full uniform. Mounting the quarter-deck, he said, "My lads, all is not lost; but we must preserve order in attempting to relieve the corvette. The commander has been dangerously wounded, and cannot appear on deck; but I have received his instructions, and he depends upon us. If our efforts prove fruitless, then, having done our duty, we will abandon the corvette. We will save the females first, then the sick; you, then the officers; the commander and I shall be last. I rely upon you, therefore do the same with me."

Turning towards the boatswain, he shouted with a firm voice, "Hoist the French colours."

The flag floated majestically in the midst of the most profound silence; then Pierre, pointing to it, said, "My brave sailors, think of that; white or tricolor, still it is France. Be worthy of her. *Vive la France!*"

"*Vive la France!*" shouted the crew with exaltation; then each began in coolness to fulfil his duty.

The bank upon which the vessel had run, was composed principally of shells, so that she remained motionless in the trough that she had made.

If the breeze did not increase, if the sea remained calm, there was still hope.

Through the inconceivable activity of Pierre, which increased with the danger, a few of the sailors began, in the most mournful silence, to build a raft, while everything was being prepared to get the Salamander out of her dangerous position.

"Master Buyk predicted truly," said Bouquin to La Joie, "the corvette is b——"

"What would you have?" replied La Joie, with the cable in his hand. "The corvette, like the sailors, is not eternal. It is like a glass—if not broken, of course it will last longer."

"Look, La Joie, there's a red cloud astern of us that makes me wince. There's wind in its tail, depend upon it."

"Yes, Bouquin; but give us a hand here, and pay no attention to it."

"Yes, La Joie; but depend upon it, that red fellow there will bring bad luck to the lieutenant for attempting to stab the commander."

"It will bring him good luck. Don't you know, Bouquin, that in a shipwreck, a fellow can allow himself to be drowned, and I would rather have that, than see Pierre shot. Shooting's good enough for soldiers."

"Do you see, La Joie, they have dropped anchor? We shall soon see if we are able to get the corvette out of this cursed hole. This is the decisive moment, as that other fellow said; and then, as the Ottoman says, if it's to be done, it will be done; if it's not to be done, well, it will not be done."

Paul, Merval, and Bidaud, had executed the orders of Pierre, but unfortunately a hold could not be effected with the anchor.

The horizon became marbled with red and rapid clouds; the wind began to rise, and the waves to curl upon the sands.

Pierre looked at the horizon, examined his compass, and said to himself, "It's all up. To judge from the wind, we have scarcely an hour to finish the raft, which is now our only hope."

What was strange in this frightful position was, that danger did not present itself with a frightful and menacing aspect; the sky was still clear, the sea was still calm, and the corvette remained almost motionless. It was not one of those impetuous wrecks when the furious waves waft you to and fro, and ultimately dash you against a rock. It was a calm yet frightful wreck, like sullen rage—a shipwreck in which it was possible to calculate the moment of destruction with mathematical

exactitude; it was a death when the minute of its occurring could be fixed. Pierre could have said, The horizon is about ten leagues distant, the wind is gathering, and in an hour it will fall upon us; then that sea, now so calm, will swell, and at each wave the corvette will be lifted up, and precipitated upon the sand-bank; or, at the expiration of ten minutes, it will be all over with the Salamander."

This conclusion caused Pierre to give the order to make all haste with the raft.

Szaflie looked on with imperturbable coolness, and smiled at all, for he foresaw that a frightful drama would soon be enacted, and although he, as the other passengers, would play his part, yet he shrank not from it, for one thing favourable in his dark character was invincible courage, with a contempt for life. Perhaps he thought that he would see a curious sight—civilisation combating with brute nature—the most pure sentiments at war with animal instinct. Perhaps he thought he would see to what degree the mind ceded to the body—the soul to the brute. And he walked upon the deck, casting his penetrating look upon all,

"My lads," cried Pierre, "there is now no longer use to conceal from you our present situation, for there is not the smallest chance left of saving the corvette. Get the raft completed, for it affords us the only means by which we can reach the coast."

The crew was then certain that all was lost, and each man experienced a momentary pang on leaving the good Salamander, which had borne him for such a length of time; but Necessity is a stern mistress, and the men worked away with that heedlessness which characterises the sailor. In the raft they saw another vessel only less convenient.

"I have never been on board a raft, have you, Parisian?"

"Twice, and had a splendid voyage. What excellent air! there's none of that suffocation which we find in those cursed hammocks; besides, when skimming along the water, my boys, we can amuse ourselves by pulling the sea-dogs by the tail, and when lying in our bed, we can stretch out our arms, and catch fish by the dozen."

"Hold your tongue, Parisian, and go on with your work," cried La Joie. "Look at this—you are as expert with your hands, as a sow is with her tail."

"Every one in the world," said the Parisian, "has not had the felicity of seeing broad daylight in the capital, and to be an active fellow, a clever dog, a——"

A tremendous blow, dealt by La Joie, put a period to the nomenclature.

"You will not hold your tongue, rascal, and work at the raft,

since we have no other means of escape. You are well named Parisian [thickhead]; come, get on with your work."

"Yes, yes, master," said the incorrigible Parisian, "I understand. You told me that in the left ear by demolishing the half of my right cheek."

The construction of the raft was scarcely completed, when the sea moaned, and the wind began to rise.

Pierre became pale, and ordered the masts to be cut away, in order to lighten the vessel. At that moment Master Buyk came on deck, stating that the vessel had sprung a leak.

"All hands to the pumps!" shouted Pierre.

The pumps were worked for a short time, but the water rushing in so rapidly rendered all efforts unavailable.

There was now no alternative but to leave the vessel; and Pierre ordered instant departure.

"Our chests!" cried several sailors.

The chest of a sailor contains his fortune—his all.

"I forbid any of you from going below," shouted Pierre; "let each leave the vessel according to order."

No one afterwards thought anything more of his chest.

"M. Merval," said Pierre, "get the sick on board the shallop, then the females. The commander and I shall embark last in the yawl. Make all haste, for our time is short."

It was a painful yet admirable sight to see these men, grave and silent, quitting that vessel, one by one, in which they left all that they possessed in the world, to brave incalculable dangers, without a murmur, without a word of regret. Such was the absolute discipline that Pierre had established on board.

When the boats were manned, the sailors began to embark the sick, who were accompanied by old Garnier.

"Come along, my lads," said the worthy doctor. "The exertion will do you good; besides, you will have a change of air. In truth, it is all for your benefit."

Giving this strange consolation, the doctor caused the invalids to be placed in the shallop, in the most comfortable manner possible.

Then came Alice and her aunt, accompanied by their female attendants. Strange! Alice was calm, and with coolness tried to excite her aunt's courage. Her exalted and nervous organisation gained energy as the horrors of her situation increased; but when she saw Szaffie she became pale.

The females, placed in a chair, were lowered one after another into the raft, which was commanded by Paul.

The poor lad, bewildered by the events that had transpired, had had all his energies called into requisition by the service, and thereby had almost forgotten his griefs; but the sight of Alice brought all again to his recollection. His heart sank, and

turning away his head, a burning tear started to his eye, and trickled down his cheek.

The voice of Pierre was heard, and silence ensued.

"Is each officer at his post?"

"Yes, lieutenant," said Merval, "and we now wait further orders. The cable connects the raft."

"Yes, lieutenant," said Bidaud, "all is ready in the shallop."

"Yes, lieutenant," said Paul, "the raft is all right, and I now wait your orders to cut the rope."

"Have you the compass and the instruments?" asked Pierre.

"Yes, lieutenant," said Merval; "I have them in the shallop."

"Have you the log-books?"

"Yes, lieutenant," said Paul; "they are fastened to the mast of the raft."

"Well," said Pierre, "let the names in each boat be called over, to make certain that there's no one on board."

The names were called over, and the crew was complete, except six seamen, who were to man the yawl, in which Pierre was to join the raft.

"Prepare to cut the cables," cried Pierre, with emotion, and Bouquin raised his knife above the only cord that bound the raft to the Salamander.

"Loosen everything."

The cord was cut, and the raft was towed away by the boats.

That last command reached the hearts of the sailors, for that cord was the only link that connected them with the Salamander. Once severed, there was no longer hope; all was finished between them and the corvette.

● It was time, for the waves becoming terrific, rolled on, one after another, as high as the masts of the Salamander, and when they met the resistance which the vessel embedded in the bank made, doubling their violence they struck against the corvette, threw her upon her side, and tumbled Pierre and the six seamen upon the deck.

The lieutenant, seeing that there was no time to be lost, was descending to liberate the commander, but on putting his foot upon the first step, he was thrown down violently by the commotion of the vessel, received a dreadful wound upon the temple, and fainted, covered with blood.

Szaffie, who had remained on board to see all, raised Pierre, and bandaging the wound with his handkerchief, said, "Come my lads; the sea is rough, the raft is distant; let us embark we shall have our work to reach the raft."

Pierre was lowered, senseless, into the yawl, and Szaffie, casting a last look upon the corvette, said, with a frightful smile, "It is laughable indeed, and I am just as well pleased, that the stupid Marquis is left behind. He will soon get tired of being alone."

When the yawl reached the raft, Pierre, still senseless, was placed in it.

The Marquis was forgotten. Those in the shallop thought he was in the raft, and those in the raft thought he was in the shallop.

Poor corvette! All eyes were turned towards her, which appeared now and then, with her white sails like a snowy cloud in a dark and stormy sky.

Once free of the bank, the raft became more manageable. At the expiration of an hour the corvette was no longer in sight, except at long intervals, when the sails were distinguished like the wings of a gull in the distance.

Then nothing could be discerned, for night approached, and it became dark—very dark and sombre.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A NIGHT IN SUMMER.

How soft are the rays of the moon, when reflected upon the clear and limpid waters; but when hidden beneath thick rapid clouds, they appear at intervals red and fiery, like a strange meteor. Are they not the forerunners of a night of storm and of despair at sea.

This was, indeed, a terrible night.

The impetuous waves, tipped with foam, swelled and howled furiously, and the voice of the tempest, dying away in mournful moanings, broke out again with renewed fury.

Then a shrill noise was heard, a heavy rolling sound, which seemed like cries of agony.

It was the waves as they broke upon the raft, which was alone, for all the boats had been swamped, and Merval, Bidaud, and those with them had perished.

The raft was driven to and fro by the tempest, for the mast was broken and shattered. Level with the sea, it could not be capsized, but each wave that broke over it immersed the survivors, and wounded some with broken fragments that the storm in its violence splintered from the raft.

For five days that tempest had lasted, It was no longer the brave and fine crew of the Salamander that clung to that frail machine. It was a set of frightful beings, with hollow eyes, long beards, and ferocious smiles upon their lips. Famine, during the last five days, had enfeebled them, and they, having given themselves entirely up to the cravings of nature, were

almost without reason, for all within them was dead. Their only hope was in sudden death. But, no! famine shrivelled their entrails; thirst parched their mouths; their wounds, raw and red, were quickened by the acidity of the water. Rage was at their hearts, and blasphemy in their mouths; still they clung to life.

In that state suicide is impossible, for there is reasoning in suicide, and they could no longer reason.

Suicide rarely takes place in the midst of privations and misery. It is requisite to taste sumptuous delights—to enjoy the sweets of wine and of women—to concentrate all the pleasures known or dreamt of; fill a sparkling cup of gold with them, and then say, after having drunk the last drop of that nectar, “The cup is empty. Adieu!”

But in the midst of the most frightful wretchedness, should a spark of life remain, it is cherished as is the last spark of a furnace which is expiring.

So did they cling to life on board the raft; and to nourish the thirty survivors there were only three pounds of biscuits and a small cask of brandy left.

With one common accord they might have put a period to their miserable existence, but no, they clung to life; they preferred living in tears, in torture, and in crime.

There were now no longer father and son, officers or sailors, wives or daughters. No; there were starving beings, who, to satisfy their hunger would stop at nothing.

There was one alone who appeared above those dreadful cravings. It was Szaffie, who, unchanged, was leaning against the fragment of the mast, observing all in calmness.

At each wave that struck the raft, some crouched their heads, while others opposed the shock. Others, again, made no effort whatever, but lay in lethargy, their eyes open, gnawing the end of a rope that chance had placed near them.

Some, again, who had their legs broken, laughed and shouted. Pain and hunger had rendered them mad.

The greater number, leaning on each other in the middle of the raft, yielded, like an inanimate mass, to the motion of the float.

At the back part was Paul and his father, old Garnier, Alice, her aunt, and Szaffie.

Through the influence of discipline, the remaining provisions were still under the charge of the officers.

The lieutenant, enveloped in a Spanish cloak, had his eyes fixed upon his son; Paul was gazing upon Alice, who, crouching, her head upon her knees, dripping wet, and trembling from cold, had her looks fixed upon Szaffie.

Madame de Bleiné, past seeing or hearing, lay stretched on the raft like an inanimate object.

At that moment the tempest became more violent; the raft, borne away by tremendous waves, which struck it on the side, rested at times almost perpendicular.

Then the sailors were, from the frightful commotion, thrown from one place to another; the officers endeavoured to keep them in the centre, but their orders were not heeded; they would not listen to them.

At that terrible moment, the sailors, believing their last hour was come, exchanged a few words with each other; then arming themselves with pikes and hatchets, they advanced towards the stern of the raft.

"We must have drink," said La Joie, brandishing a hatchet, "we want to get drunk, so that we may die in glory."

Pierre started up, seized the barrel with one hand, and with the other he held out a pistol, saying, "Wretches! it is our only resource. We must take care of it."

"Your pistol is of no use; it is wet," said La Joie, lowering the hatchet, "the wine!"

"Wine! Wine!" repeated the others. "The wine, or death!"

"You revolt, do you?" cried Pierre, looking round him for a weapon.

"There are no longer officers here. We are the strongest, and must have the wine."

"No!"

"Yes!" said La Joie, menacing Pierre.

Paul, seeing his father in danger, threw himself upon La Joie, but the sailor struck him down with a blow of his hatchet.

Pierre, wishing to avenge his son, received also a severe wound.

The doctor and two sailors, who had remained faithful, opposed the men, but they were knocked down, trampled upon, and were thrown in front of the raft.

In the tumult, Madame de Bleincé, thrust to the side of the raft, was, in holding out her hand to Alice, carried away by a wave; Alice saw her drowning, but could render no assistance, for she was holding on by a beam, to prevent herself from being carried away by the flood.

"Drink, drink!" shouted La Joie, holding in one hand an axe, and in the other a goblet.

"Drink! yes, yes, let us die drunk!" cried the others; and all rushed upon the cask, which was emptied in a few minutes.

Intoxication soon attacked the feeble brains of those who had undergone so many privations, and in the midst of the roaring of the tempest, they began to sing strange words with a feeble voice, incoherent and mournful tunes, like the songs of madmen.

By the red glare of the moon several tried to dance, but, gorged with drink, they fell dead drunk, rolling here and there

upon the raft; and when trying to raise themselves, disappeared in the sea without uttering a cry.

The Parisian, intoxicated, perceived Alice, and holding on by the empty cask, said, thrusting the goblet against the teeth of the young girl, "Take hold. Drink!"

Alice, with delight, drained the cup to the last drop; her eyes beamed brighter, and her cheeks became flushed. *

"Ah! how pretty you're getting," stammered the Parisian. "Kiss me for my trouble;" and the sailor placed his impure lips upon the mouth of Alice, who said, in pushing him feebly from her, "Oh! the wine has done me so much good. I am still thirsty; give me more."

"Do you see that, Paul?" said Szaffie, pointing to Alice and the sailor. Then putting his mouth to the ear of the unfortunate lad, who was in agony from a wound in the shoulder, he added, "You see that, Paul; but I told you so. Discipline, modesty, devotedness, love, Paul—everything gives way to the irresistible influence of hunger or thirst. Noble sentiments, that depend upon a thing so ignoble, so— But you do not hear. You have fainted. But you shall hear me," he added, with a demoniac smile.

Then, taking a cordial from his pocket, and making Paul respire it, the young lad recovered.

"For pity's sake, leave me."

"I save you, my lad. Come, eat," said Szaffie, opening with caution the box that he had carried with him from the corvette, and taking from it a small morsel of some solid substance which he gave to Paul.

The young lad carried it with avidity to his lips; then, as if struck by a sudden thought, he stopped, broke it in three pieces; and crawling to his father, gave him one of them, but Alice was too far distant—he could not reach her.

CHAPTER XLIV.

A SAIL! A SAIL!

Two days elapsed. The tempest had subsided, the sky was blue, and the sun shone high in the firmament.

The wine having been drunk, and the biscuit trampled upon, the remainder of the crew began to eat shoes, hats, sails, or anything they could lay their hands upon. After drinking the seawater, they put pieces of lead in their mouths, hoping that the metallic freshness would quench their thirst.

A sea-dog was caught; then to get part of it another massacre ensued.

Old Garnier died cursing his *children*, and his body, with three parts of that of the Parisian, was consumed.

But this execrable nurture shortened the days of those who partook of it.

Two or three of the sailors, with Szaffie, who alone could stand upright, had their eyes fixed on the horizon. Gazing at the vaporous and uncertain line, with inconceivable attention, they thought they perceived a sail.

Szaffie, above all, viewed it with anxiety; for he, also, had begun to feel the horrors of his situation. He had had the precaution to take with him a very nourishing substance, compressed in small space.—[Venison mashed and dried with sugar. The Indians in their long hunting excursions take no other provisions. An ounce a-day will sustain a robust man, although subjected to hard exercise.]—Szaffie had till that time escaped the tortures of hunger. But this means of prolonging life had diminished, and he had lost hopes of the raft drifting upon the African coast; for a land breeze had blown violently, and had driven them out to sea; so it was with an expression of joy, difficult to describe, that he shouted out—

“A sail! a sail!”

These magic words—“A sail! a sail!”—found a response in the hearts of the dying. Eyes long shut opened and brightened up; the wounded raised themselves, and turned their feeble looks towards the spot pointed out by Szaffie. Some, joining their hands, burst into laughter, and others again wept with joy.

This exclamation—“A sail! a sail!”—like a consoling balm spreading itself over wounds, assuaged pain and appeased their hunger, and hope began to extinguish hatred and all sentiments of violence.

These men, a few hours ago, so cruel, so savage, approached each other, and held out their hands in joy; uttering cries of delight that proceeded from the recesses of the soul.

A few, in complete stupor, not understanding the general joy, were shook by their comrades, who cried, “We are saved, my lad—a sail!”

Paul and his father exchanged looks—sublime looks of affection; then, in silence, embraced each other.

Alice, overcome, was in a nervous stupor, which evinced itself by sudden startling emotions. She was insensible, and dead to everything around.

“A sail!” That exclamation was repeated, and murmured with joy; for, by degrees, the welcome vessel became more and more distinct, and the sails of a frigate shone in the rays of the sun.

What a moment was that, when all incertitude ceased, and

when that sign of safety was received with inward thanksgiving. Then gratitude inundated the hearts of those reckless sailors, impious and hardened. Poor fellows! their hearts, ulcerated by long endurance, could not contain so much happiness. Their joy overflowing, they offered up to God a prayer of gratitude and of love.

At that moment a few of them began to sing a northern song, entitled "Good succour at Notre Dame."

"On your knees, my lads!" shouted Pierre.

And all went upon their knees—their hands uplifted—their eyes wet with tears.

Nothing could be more imposing—more sublime—than this group, with pale faces, haggard looks, and squalid hands trembling and united, thanking God for this unexpected succour.

The frigate approached the raft, and Pierre said, with his ordinary view to discipline—"We shall leave the raft as we came to it. First the females, the sick, the men, and then the officers."

The officers? He and his son comprised the whole.

"Yes, lieutenant," said the sailors, with submission; for love, respect, and subordination, returned with the hope of safety.

"Father," said Paul, "you are not strong enough to come upon deck."

"Oh Paul, my boy!" exclaimed Pierre, embracing his son, "I do not know how it is, but a secret voice tells me that we will not part yet. Surely Heaven cannot separate us now; for I prayed for you, my son. I implored Him for you, and He never abandons those who implore him."

"My mother told me so," said the young man, kissing his father's hand.

At that moment Szaffie, with an expression of uneasiness, pointed to the frigate; it began to veer in a different direction; then stamping with violence, he shouted, "Hell and fury, they see us not."

"What is it?" cried Pierre.

"They are going away from us!" and Szaffie gnashed his teeth.

"Impossible!" cried Pierre.

Such, however, was the case. The frigate's sails were unfurled to catch the breeze; and she became less and less, till all disappeared in the horizon.

As long as a vestige of the sails was seen upon the surface of the water, a ray of hope buoyed up the hearts of those unfortunate men, for they wished not—they could not believe in such a freak of destiny.

But when nothing was seen upon the horizon—when nothing was seen but the sun, which gilded the blue sea, calm and deserted, they experienced the most poignant grief which the heart can bear. Reaction ensued, and torpor succeeded the

exalted state to which hope had given rise. When hope had become totally extinct in the bosoms of each—when nothing could be discerned, frightful oaths were uttered against Him whom they had invoked. Hatred, which hope for a moment had lulled, became more deadly; and these poor wretches, revenging themselves upon themselves, for their common misery, in frenzy attacked each other.

Szaffie, from pain, uttered a dreadful shriek. It was one of these poor wretches that was lacerating his foot with a knife.

Next day that fit of frantic rage had passed away, and hunger took the ascendancy.

Pierre and his son were lying near each other. Their reason was giving way, and everything began to turn round.

"Paul," said Pierre, with a broken voice, "I am very hungry. Where did you get that which you gave me yesterday?"

"From Szaffie."

"Has he any more?"

"I do not know."

"Come and see; we can take it from him. We are two to one."

They crawled towards Szaffie, who was lying motionless.

Pierre placed his knee upon Szaffie's stomach, and held a poniard to his throat, while Paul searched for the box.

"Give it to me! give it to me!" cried Pierre, on seeing his son open it.

"Wait."

"No; give it to me."

"It is mine!" cried Paul, taking out a piece of the meat, and carrying it to his mouth.

"I shall have it!" cried Pierre, throwing himself furiously upon his son; and a fearful struggle ensued, which awoke Szaffie, who cried,

"Oh, you have robbed me! you would have assassinated me!"

Then he added, with a feeble voice, in contemplating the fearful struggle between the father and son—"You see, Paul, that the poniard will decide between your father and you. Well, eat it; eat it. It is dearly-bought—parricide."

Night happily closed over this horrible scene; and the next morning, Szaffie, recovering from a nervous drowsiness, believed himself under the influence of a frightful nightmare.

CHAPTER XLV.

CALENTURE.

It was noon; and the vertical sun shedding its burning rays upon the limpid waters, reflected myriads of fires, while the raft lay motionless upon the smooth sea.

Except the wounded and the dead, all the sailors were standing, their eyes shining, their lips red, and countenances animated. Only, instead of feeling that soft and penetrating heat which these exterior symptoms announced, they were bathed in cold perspiration, and their limbs were stiff and icy. Except this, and convulsions, which gave to each countenance a strange and frightful expression, nothing in them announced the privations which they had experienced. A few adjusted as much as possible his disordered jacket, and tied his cravat, in saying, "The lieutenant is going to inspect us. We must put on a good appearance."

Others saw in the distance towns of gold and of marble, whose houses were built like amphitheatres.

"It is Smyrna," said they. "We have now arrived. God! How beautiful! Look at the silver domes, crystal basins, and orangeries. See; women are calling us. Come along, comrade. Come along! give me your arm!"

They advanced to the end of the raft, which was almost level with the water, stumbled, and fell into the sea.

Some, perched on an empty cask, thought they were seated at a sumptuous banquet.

"Hand me over that fowl, comrade," said one.

"Here it is," said another, as if serving him; "you will find it excellent."

"What wine!"

"What excellent bread!"

"My faith, we must enjoy ourselves! We are not always on land."

The dance ensued; a rapid waltz between two sailors, who began upon the raft, and ended in the sea.

Others thought they saw the huts in which they were born, in which were their wives, their children, and all that was dear to them. In affection, they imagined they kissed their wives and children, promising never more to leave them.

All this was accomplished with smiles on the lip, or tears in the eye; and all appeared so natural, that a blind man might have taken the aberrations of that scene for reality.

In the midst of that frightful scene, Szaffie remained struck with stupor. For, like Paul, having taken a morsel of the pre-

served meat, he was not influenced by that cerebral affection caused by a burning sun, and by the reaction of a gnawing stomach upon an enfeebled brain.

Szaffie and Paul alone remained calm and sensible in the midst of this frightful scene.

Alice, thin and haggard, but with cheeks coloured with a lively incarnation, and eyes sparkling, rose before them like a statue; her hair in disorder, and her clothes sullied. She advanced.

Paul hid his face in his hands.

She looked in all directions; and, when her eyes fell upon Szaffie, she pushed aside, with supernatural force, the sailors who obstructed her passage.

"Oh Szaffie!" she said, with a feeble voice; then, "leaning against him with tenderness, she added, "Thou art mine, my adored one, whom I love with all my heart!"

Paul tried to crawl away, but he could not. He had enough left of moral strength to listen and understand, but had not physical force to fly.

"I thought I loved Paul," she added. "Poor lad! To me he was a companion, a kind of brother; he possessed a feeble and tender heart; that's all; but you, Szaffie!" she said, drawing back her head in pride, "thou art my lover; each of thy looks is to me both pleasure and pain; and then thy burning and intoxicating caresses—Oh! thy caresses, which, since the day I gave myself up to thee—all to thee—I ever feel, for their impress remains with me still—since that day, my life has been only a long-continued pleasure; for thy kisses are still upon my lips."

"Oh Death!" cried Paul, in distraction.

"Who speaks of death? To live with thee, Szaffie! To live with thee! Come, come! My aunt is dead. My mother is dead. My father is dead. Indeed, every one is dead to me since the day that I first loved thee. Come, I am thine! Look! dost thou see that lovely blue chamber? It is mine. That bed, with white curtains, it is mine, too. No; I mean to say, thine. These flowers that thou lovest, it was I who put them in these alabaster vases. Come, my adored one; for thou art my lover. What do I care for the contempt of the world? Thou art my life, my soul. What is the world to me? Thou art my world, Szaffie."

The eyes of Szaffie sparkled; and Alice added, imagining that she was undressing herself—"See; this is the black gown which made me appear so white. How cruelly tight I am laced! Yes, it is broken. See how the breeze wafts my long brown hair, which thou lovest so much, which falls upon my shoulders. Now come, love—come; I am waiting for thee."

The unfortunate girl, imagining she was getting into bed, strode over the raft, and fell into the water.

Paul uttered a piercing cry, held out his hands, tried to rise; but could not.

"Save—save her, monster!" cried Paul, as the poor girl rose to the surface.

Uttering the word "Szaffie!" she disappeared for ever.

"She dies happy!" said Szaffie, with a deep voice; and a tear started to his eye.

"Alice! Alice! My father! Alice!" cried Paul, endeavouring to rise.

That voice—the word "father," roused Pierre, who shared in the general exultation. The lieutenant, imagining that he was taking the sun's altitude, said—

"Immediately, Paul; immediately. You know we must see to the route of the Salamander. The commander gave me the charge, and he is a brave man, and has had a great deal of experience."

Then, as if putting away his instruments, he added—

"Now, Paul, I am at your service. I am with you, my dear boy; for you are everything to me. Yes; when I was ill, you did everything for me. Love for love, Paul; existence for existence."

Paul shuddered at these words; and cursed himself.

"Paul, my boy; I am ill. I do not know how, but I am wounded in the head and in the arm. Come, my lad; let me press you to my arms; then I will suffer no longer. We will soon be at Smyrna; and, when there," he added, whisperingly, "I shall tell you good news. I have been speaking to Madame de Bleiné about Alice; and you shall see, my boy! It gives me joy to think that you will soon be happy; for not a day passes but I think of your happiness. If this should take place, Paul, it will add happiness to my old days. Embrace me, ungrateful rascal."

The lieutenant put his arms round the neck of his son, who shuddered at the icy touch of his father.

Then Pierre, starting back, cried—"Here I am, commander; what are your orders?" and he went to the middle of the raft, sat down, and appeared as if conversing with some one.

"Oh wretchedness!" cried Paul. "Death! Oh, how infamous I am!"

"Why would you die, Paul?" said Szaffie. "You have attained that state which causes you to despise yourself—to despise others; you have seen it, and believe that——"

Szaffie stopped suddenly. He had become weak, and his ideas were confused; but, governed by his frightful doctrine, he wished to extend it, even on the brink of the tomb.

"Well; you see," continued he, with a broken voice, "you

have seen, and it is proved, that matter regulates mind; that animal instinct is the strongest. Honour, respect, love, pater-nity—all vanish before hunger. Alice! your father!”—

“Leave me, leave me,” said Paul. “Thou art, indeed, Satan.”

“Would to God I were,” said Szaffie; and a bitter smile contracted his lips.

“Oh!” exclaimed Paul, with a dying voice, as he endeavoured to reach the side of the raft, that he might throw himself into the water.

CHAPTER XLVI.

LEILA.

The lake of Tsad is certainly lovely; for its waters are limpid, and the sand which borders its bed is strewn with shells and branches of coral.

At times the finny tribe, with scales of azure, and golden fins, is seen seizing the long green herb that floats upon the wave, and, drawing the blue petals of that lovely flower, disappear under the purple boughs of the coral bank; at others, the white heron, with its black head, and extended neck, watching its prey on the borders of the lake.

Situated in the hollow of the basin, formed by the inaccessible mountains of Bournou, and somewhat distant from Tripoli and the African coast, this lake, which is almost unknown, appears fresh and pure, like a dew-drop in the heart of a flower.

Surrounded by acacias, palm-trees, and bananiers, whose varied shades are reflected in the limpid water, there is scarcely space left for the reflection of the blue heavens, so bushy are the wide-spreading branches.

Then the banks are so white—so level; and the prairie which encircles it is so green, so fertile in sward, that it is a favourite resort of the feathery tribe—the teal, the pelican, the crane—which, leaving the stream in playfulness, shake the limpid drops that appear like diamonds sparkling in the rays of the sun, from their humid wings.

But what cries of fright are these? It is the aquatic troop, turning and flying, and taking refuge on a little island covered with larch-trees and tuberoses.

Poor birds, why fly? The appearance of fair Leila, the lovely Indian, who pensively advances, clothed in a buskin,

fastened at the waist by a white silk ribbon, is not so frightful or menacing.

Leila was holding in her hand a small basket made of reeds, which was filled with choice flowers. Coming up to a red mangolia, she stooped to pick the lovely flower, when suddenly she uttered a shriek of surprise. Separating a few thick bananier leaves, and seizing a branch of an acacia, she drew to her a large egg of a white and rosy hue.

Taking up her basket, filled with perfumed flowers, she placed it carefully upon the lake; then, in anxiety, kept her eyes upon it.

The waters, ruffled by the feeble breeze, swelled the stems; and the frail vessel was wrecked upon the island where the birds had taken refuge.

Sad and terrible foundering, where the wreck became entangled with long grass, and with shells of all colours, which sparkled like precious stones.

Leila, however, appeared disheartened at this catastrophe; for, with an expression of grief, she took up the egg, and pensively stopped several times before she reached the Temple of Lari.

The sun was setting when she arrived.

The Temple of Lari, forming in the interior a long parallelogram, was constructed of odoriferous bamboos, fastened by rolls of cotton of the most glaring colours, which, in the darkness, were scarcely distinguished by Leila.

The fair girl, in pensiveness, advanced towards the sanctuary. At the extremity of the temple was a large purple curtain, embroidered with flowers of silver, which were transparent, and seemed to screen a focus of light; for lively, red reflections, were thrown upon the bamboo columns of the sanctuary.

Near the curtain was a slight balustrade of painted reeds, which barred the entry to the sanctuary.

That magnificent gallery was ornamented by wondrous arabesques, formed of the feathers of the peacock, of the colibris, and of the verla; and the thousand shades of these variegated plumes confounded themselves with the dark ground, which appeared like black velvet bordered with gold and silver, rubies, and emeralds.

Near the balustrade, and suspended by a reed, curiously plaited, was a bag bordered with gold, and perfumed with rose leaves.

Into this bag, which was surrounded with flowers, Leila deposited the sacred egg. Seizing a kind of psaltery with two cords, she produced a vibrating sound, which for a moment swelled above the warblings of the birds; then, clasping her hands, and placing them upon her bosom, she retired backwards, singing a plaintive hymn.

The young girl, as she retired from the sacred spot, lowered her voice, so that, when she reached the door of the temple, she pronounced the last word of the hymn in a whisper.

When silence announced that the adorer of Lari had withdrawn, the grand-priest, Barca-Gana, came out of the temple, approached the curtain, saw the egg, and prostrated himself.

Barca-Gana was about sixty years of age, of dark olive colour, with a keen eye sparkling beneath his long, white eyelashes.

The last of a wandering tribe, who came from the Persian Gulf, he had established himself among the inaccessible mountains of Bournou, and had brought with him the superstitions of his native land; and, like various sects, Egyptians, Hindoos, and Persians, he adored God in the creature. The crane is the sacred bird of these idolators.

Barca-Gana, robed in a green bouakin, which enveloped his person, had his face covered with an orange-coloured crape veil, with flowers of gold, and fastened on his forehead by a band of precious stones.

He approached the silken bag in which the sacred egg was deposited—the egg of a crane; and, after several genuflexions, he began to sing, in a monotonous tone, the following words :

“Open the sanctuary. It is a ray of celestial light—a spark of heavenly fire—

“To the chosen of the grand scheik of the green valleys—Thou, who fructifiest the germ with the breath of thy nostrils—

“Open the sanctuary—

“For thee are the sacred lizards, with blue scales, of which thou shalt eat. For thee the dates are filled with milk and honey, and thou shalt eat of them; for thee the softest bed of cotton. It is for thee, chosen one of the grand scheik of the green valley, to vivify by thy heat, the divine germ—

“Open the sanctuary.

“My head is girt with tailek, and my shoulders with bouakan. Open the sanctuary! It is a spark of divine fire which thou shalt vivify with thy breath, chosen one of the grand scheik of the green valleys!”

An invisible hand drew the curtain, and a flood of light inundated the interior of the temple.

Barco-Gana was dazzled by the spectacle which presented itself.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE ELECTED OF THE GRAND SCHEIK OF THE GREEN VALLEYS.

The space hidden by the curtain formed a half circle, somewhat elongated, which, like the other parts of the temple, was constructed of bamboo, painted in a lively pink colour, and surmounted by gold rings, which appeared like chapters of elegant columns.

From the middle of the dome hung a large lamp, richly emblazoned, whose white and pure flame spread around more perfume than light.

In the centre of this sanctuary was a square altar, supported by bronze feet, and covered with Indian and Persian tissues of variegated colours, which hung in rich folds round this sort of couch, composed of the whitest and finest cotton.

On each side of the bed were two enormous fans made of peacock's feathers, which were moved by an invisible hand; and in this bed, with a crown of crane's feathers, ornamented with diamonds, lay, with his arms round his neck, in the midst of gold symbolic signs, and precious stones, which sparkled on his breast—lay, I say, the EX-TOBACCONIST, the EX-CAPTAIN, the EX-MARQUIS of LONGETOUR, who was the elected of the grand scheik of the green valleys.

The worthy marquis had become prodigiously stout; his face, sleek and plump, announced his sound state of health; and his long, grey beard, gave him a certain druidical air, which was very imposing.

Still, the husband of Elizabeth twitched his face in anger on seeing Barca-Gana respectfully lift the cachmere covering, to deposit the sacred egg.

"Another! Good!" said the Marquis. "Another to hatch! These cursed animals take me for an oven, or for a cloaking hen. They damnably abuse my natural heat, by making use of it to hatch their cursed cruaes. If they would leave them with me, that would be company at least; and I might get attached to them. But no. Once they are able to stand upon their legs, off they are taken! Away with you! away with you! cursed animal!" added the Marquis, on seeing the genufluxions of Barca-Gana, when leaving the sanctuary. "Now I shall have peace till ten o'clock, when I shall be brought fried lizards with spices, and dates preserved in honey and cream. What trouble I had in accustoming myself to this repast! but now I find it very palatable. It is, nevertheless, strange nourishment. My God! who would have thought, four months ago, when playing a game at draughts at the Café Saint Magloire, that one day I

would be compelled to hatch crane's eggs in Africa, and to live upon lizards? Then, who would have thought that the lieutenant would be villain enough to leave me in the corvette? Oh! I shall never forgive him! And, should I one day see France! For, if he had not abandoned me, that miserable Sam-Bai, whom he foolishly allowed to escape, taking the renegade for a corn merchant of Odessa!—that infamous apostate!—would not have found me, the evening of the wreck of the corvette which he came to pillage, in my cabin more dead than alive—would not have taken me on board his vessel, nor brought me to this coast, nor sold me for a slave to a barbarous wretch, who wished to make a horse of me by causing me to carry hogs-heads. This fellow, finding that this went against my grain, put me to drawing water; but I was not strong enough even for that. At last, happily for me—for this is happiness, compared to my former hardships—that long-bearded animal who has just left gave a camel and two guns for me, brought me to these mountains, nested me in this bed, covered me with drapery, and for thirty-three days I have been fulfilling this beastly and cursed occupation! God alone knows how long this will last. Where may the others be now? That strange devil of a lieutenant, and Alice, and Madame de Bleiné, the crew and their raft—Perhaps, lost! Well, I am better here; but how much better? Oh, Elizabeth! Elizabeth! a thousand curses on thee! It is thy fault: for, had it not been for thee, I would still have been in the Rue de Grammont, happy and contented, selling my snuff and tobacco!"

The worthy marquis ceased speaking, and became pensive until the hour of supper; after which he slept the sleep of the just and of the elected of the grand scheik of the green valleys.

Next morning the Marquis was suddenly roused from his slumbers by an unusual noise. Instead of the sharp and guttural language that usually resounded in the temple, he distinguished European voices. His heart beat, and he thought he would have cried with joy, when his large curtain was drawn aside, and three English officers, with red coats, advanced in the most devout manner, conducted by Barca-Gana, who admitted them to adore the mysterious saint.

Scarcely had the Marquis perceived these gentlemen, than he cried, "In the name of Heaven, whoever you may be, have pity on me!"

The three officers looked at each other in astonishment, for they were startled to find a European in this singular position.

"You are French, sir!" said one of them.

"Yes, gentlemen; captain of a French frigate. Take me with you! save me!"

"It is impossible, sir," said one of the Englishman, "for us to take you by force. We are going to Tripoli, by the orders of

Lord Bathurst. We will see the French consul, sir; and will use our own influence with the Dey to restore you to liberty."

"And if you succeed, sir, I shall bless you all the days of my life."

"Do not be disheartened. In three days we shall be at Tripoli, and shortly afterwards you will hear from us. Farewell; for I am afraid that our conversation may prove injurious to you."

Barca-Gana seemed highly displeased; but the Englishman's interpreter pacifying him, he conducted the strangers out of the temple; and when he saw them descend the high mountains, the frown that wrinkled his brow gradually disappeared.

These officers formed a portion of those sent out on the voyage of discovery that preceded that of the unfortunate Major Laing. Having learnt from their interpreters that he was retained in the mountains of Bournou, by a new religious sect that had sprung up, they went in search of him. This accounts for their meeting with the ex-tobacconist.

Barca-Gana made an excellent affair of his purchase of the Marquis.

According to the custom of all Hindoo sects, who worship birds, the emigrants of Bournou never allow birds to sit upon eggs belonging to the sacred birds. They are considered of a purer essence when incubated by man; so this was an honorary office conferred upon the ex-tobacconist.

Barca Gana thought that a white, so uncommon and so different from themselves, would have a better effect in the sacred bed, in the eyes of his believers, and that he could hatch as well as any other. He, therefore, bought the Marquis as a charlatan purchases, in preference, a horse that is striped to draw his carriage. Unfortunately for Barca Gana, he did not enjoy his bargain long. The officers, on arriving at Tripoli, informed the European consul, who applied to the Dey, and escorts of Arabs were sent to relieve the worthy Formon from his holy occupations.

The Dey went further to please the English consul, for without consulting him he caused the inhabitants of Lari to be decimated, hung Barca Gana as an idolator, and placed Leila in his own harem.

The Marquis arrived, mounted on a camel, at Tripoli, in excellent health, and three days afterwards a dispatch was sent off, with an account of Pierre's conduct, stating that he had, when the Salamander was in distress, locked his captain up in his cabin.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE JUDGES.

The Marquis's dispatch arrived at Cherbourg when the trading vessel, the *Two Friends*, brought the shipwrecked mariners to land. It had fallen in with the raft the day after the crew had been seized with calenture.

A council of war had for some time been assembled to judge Pierre. The accusation was based upon the journals of the *Salamander*, which were found upon the raft.

Pierre was accused of having raised his arm against his commander while performing his duty. The witnesses had been heard, and the remainder of the crew, amongst whom were Bouquin and La Joie, were obliged to bear witness against the lieutenant, for the facts were so positive, so evident, that they could not deny them. The precious document sent by the Marquis summed up the evidence against Pierre.

It was, I think, about the twentieth of November, and the fog, condensing itself round the vessels, veiled all that were in the port.

Eight o'clock had struck. Near the landing was a boat, surmounted by a flag, in which men were seated with uplifted oars, while the principal was cleaning with care the seats destined for some officers of high grade.

His attention was attracted by an old sailor, about fifty years of age, with grey hair, a wooden leg, badly clothed, and a sack upon his back, which announced that he had just arrived from a long journey.

"Master," said the old man, taking off his straw hat, and accosting him. "Oh, master! you are in the admiral's employ—are you not?"

"Yes; and what then?"

"You would render me a very great service if you would allow me to embark with you, as I wish to see him."

"The admiral?"

"Yes, master."

"Sheer off, old conger that you are. This is the boat destined to convey the admiral and his superior officers to the council of war."

"Oh, God!" said the old sailor, with an expression of fear and anguish. "What council of war?"

"You annoy me with your questions. The council of war that's going to try Pierre Huet."

"Lieutenant Huet!" exclaimed the old mariner, covering his face with his hands.

"You know him, then?"

"Oh, yes, I know him!"

"Well, be off. Here's the admiral with the officers. To your feet, my men, and look to your oars."

"Stand aside," said the admiral, pushing the old seaman, who stood before the boat.

Recalled to himself, the old man seized the admiral by the coat.

"What do you mean, sir? What the devil do you want with me?"

"Admiral," said Gratien (the name of the old sailor), "I have come from Brest on foot, and have walked with this (here the old fellow struck his wooden leg with his stick) all the way, and all to see my lieutenant, my good and brave lieutenant, who for many years has been my support—has prevented me from dying of hunger. Oh, admiral! you will allow me to see him—will you not? This desire is natural to an old sailor who loves his officer. Is it not so, admiral?"

"It is very true, my worthy man," said the officer, "and you shall see your lieutenant. Go, take a seat in front."

"Thank you; thank you, admiral," said the old sailor, leaping into the boat with the agility of a young man, notwithstanding his wooden leg.

After each had taken his seat according to his grade, a few minutes' silence ensued, which was broken by the captain of a frigate, who, addressing the admiral, said, "The dispatches relative to Commander Longetour, admiral, go much against Huet."

"That is true; there never was a greater act of insubordination."

"One thing that astonishes me is," said an officer, "that Huet, knowing that the journals were on the raft, did not throw them into the sea. It would have been so easy for him. Indeed, it was miraculous that the coffer was not washed away."

"Pierre Huet is a man of honour," said the admiral; "a brave officer, who forgot himself, under the influence of excessive love for his son. It is a fault that ought to be punished; but it is one that will admit of commiseration."

"Excuse such a violent act of insubordination!" replied a little man, with grey eyes and sallow complexion. "Why, it is not the first time that Pierre Huet has been insubordinate; which may be seen from the dispatch of the Marquis of Longetour. Discipline was odious to Pierre Huet;—discipline! that queen, that ought to reign absolute and tyrannic on board his majesty's vessels!"

"Sir!" said the admiral, with dignity and calmness, which betrayed, however, his disapprobation, "when assembled at council, you may attack the accused."

The most profound silence then reigned till the boat reached

the vessel of the admiralty, when Gratien said, "Admiral, you will not forget me!"

"No, my brave fellow. Let this man be conducted to Pierre Huet."

"Yes, admiral."

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE FATHER AND SON.

In one of the cabins, faintly lighted up by a hatch-hole, through which a pale ray of light penetrated, sat two individuals—Pierre Huet and his son.

The lieutenant, seated before a desk covered with papers, betrayed not the slightest emotion; but Paul, who, scarcely recognisable, was in a state of stupor, and was holding the two hands of his father, on whom he fixed a keen and affectionate look.

"But, father!" said he, "it is impossible; they cannot condemn you!"

"The crime is capital!" said the father, with a deep voice.

"In the name of Heaven, tell the truth! Tell what is true, and what is false."

"I have told you, my son, that my crime is real, in the eyes of the world. It would not be so, if I did not know how to sacrifice myself for the maintenance of that discipline, in the name of which I am now accused."

"But, my father, it is infamous of you to wish to die thus. Am I, then, nothing to you?"

"Paul, I was an officer before I was a father. The greater the sacrifice the more praiseworthy!" replied the infatuated mariner.

"Oh, God! do you know that in doing so you are committing a crime?" cried Paul, vehemently. "You forget, that if my mother sees you and hears you, she will curse you. You forget that her last words were—'Live for our Paul!' You know very well that if you allow yourself to be shot, I will kill myself."

"Paul!" said Pierre, with authority.

"Yes!" said the lad, exasperated. "Yes! I will kill myself at your feet, for I am tired of life. I now see *clearly*, as Szaffie said. My illusions have been taken from me, one by one. Alice died before my eyes, pronouncing the name of a man who loved her not, and whom she preferred to me, who

loved her—loved her. Oh yes! I am scarcely sixteen years of age, and the world to me is already a desert. I have only you alone—only you! and to cause a stupid coward to be respected, you, brave and loyal, tell a lie, by which you bring about your own death.

“Paul! I do my duty.”

“Your duty! It is infamous. Your duty! You, too, prove that all is false upon earth; for, do you know, that I now even doubt your love for me, my father?”

“Oh, my boy, Paul! what a thought!” said the father, with emotion.

“Pardon me, father!—pardon me, and listen—listen to your own Paul, whom you love so much. It is for you—it is for me—it is to induce you to live—that I say all this!”

“Oh, unfortunate lad! you kill me—you torture me! I should like to retract, but how can I? The deed took place before the crew, and I have avowed the crime. Oh God! my son, my son! You will, however, find, when we embrace each other for the last time, whether my heart will beat for you or not.”

“You are right, father,” said Paul, with calmness, which contrasted strangely with his previous excitement, and his countenance assumed an expression of mild serenity—“you are right, after all. Do you see? What I have said was for you. Now that you have proved to me that you cannot escape, I shall be reasonable.” •

Pierre did not understand what his son meant; and his heart bled.

“One thing you know,” continued Paul, “Alice is dead! Is she not? After your death, I, being the son of a criminal, will be compelled to leave the navy, and to live how I can. And then, who shall I live for? Acknowledge, father, with thy good and honest heart, and on the faith of a loyal mariner, would I not be a fool to think of surviving you?”

“Paul!” cried Pierre, affrighted.

“No. Picture to yourself, that I, your son—that I, was condemned to die. Would you survive me?”

“Oh God!” exclaimed Pierre.

“Father! in the name of my mother, I implore you to speak the truth. Let me see, father, would you survive me?”

Pierre replied not; but, holding his face in his hands, he groaned bitterly.

“I was sure of it. Can I possess a thought in which you do not share? No, I cannot—will not, live. You see how much I suffer. I would become mad!—much better, then, to die with you. Father, you will be tried to-day; and then, to-morrow!—yes, to-morrow, the father and son shall fall at the same moment! I ask, can I think of living after you? No; I have

now no other desire. Why do you not speak, father? Why so sad? Look at your Paul."

Pierre's feelings are difficult to describe. He understood his son's meaning; and, judging of him by himself, he felt that it was impossible for his son to survive him.

"I say, father!" continued Paul, "my head turns round, and my heart fails me. It is another attack, you see!—that—and—father!"

He became pale, his eyes closed, and he fainted in the arms of Pierre. The poor lad, enfeebled by privations on the raft, and by sorrow, was still unwell, and had only, a few days ago, recovered from a severe illness.

"Oh wretchedness!" cried Pierre; "he is still ill. This is the third time since yesterday."

When placing Paul upon his bed, Gratien entered, and, taking Pierre by the hand, said, "My good lieutenant!"

"You, here! my old friend. Heaven has sent you to my assistance. Help me to succour my son."

"It is weakness, lieutenant. Give me some vinegar."

"Here."

"Do not be uneasy, lieutenant; it is nothing."

"Listen; Gratien, I think you are devoted to me."

"I walked night and day from Brest to see you, lieutenant."

"Yes; I know it. Well, take this purse; it is all I have. Look to my son. Take him away from here. Shut him up somewhere, either with or against his will; so that I may see him no more. The sentence of death will be passed to-day, and executed to-morrow! You understand, Gratien."

"Yes, lieutenant," said the old sailor, with a firm voice.

The door was opened, and the captain-at-arms said, "Lieutenant, the council is assembled."

"I shall be up instantly," said Pierre.

When the officer retired, Pierre, approaching his son, who was still insensible, kissed his pale cheeks, and said in agony—
"Adieu, Paul, my son! Farewell, all that is dear to me! For I shall never see you more. Never! never! Yes! oh yes! soon, perhaps. Let me suffer. But what cruelty! It is now too late. I acknowledged the crime, and witnesses have proved me guilty. All is over. Adieu, then, my son, my poor boy! Oh, to die without receiving a last embrace is heart-rending!"

The wretched father threw himself upon his son, and, kissing his lips, bathed his face with tears.

He rose—went to the door—looked back—then rushed again upon Paul, whom he covered with kisses.

"I shall die here!" exclaimed the disconsolate father.
"Open the door, Gratien!"

The old sailor, whose eyes were filled with tears, opened the

door, when Pierre saw the party destined to conduct him to the council-chamber.

That sight recalled the lieutenant to himself; he started up, buttoned his coat, wiped his eyes, took his hat, and said, with a firm voice—"Let us proceed."

CHAPTER L

THE TRIAL.

The council, which had assembled in the large room, consisted of an admiral, who presided, and four captains.

When Pierre entered, he was placed before the judge, who immediately said, "Let the charges against the delinquent be read."

The little man we already mentioned, with the grey eyes, rose, opened a large volume, and read as follows:—

"Gentlemen—In the name of that discipline, shamefully outraged by a man who, from his position, ought to have respected it, we demand the severest punishment on the prisoner, Pierre Huet, lieutenant of the Royal Navy, who, before the eyes of the seamen, interrupted the order of his commander, and substituted one of his own, which, in all probability, was detrimental to the safety of the corvette. But this crime is but a shadow, contrasted with the others committed by him; for, in this frightful catalogue of crime, we fall from one abyss into another. Listen, gentlemen. At a moment of the greatest danger, heedless of the respect due to the immutable orders established on board, the delinquent, blinded by a foolish affection for his son, and forgetting his duty and discipline, ordered the commander to save his son, who was midshipman on board. But to what extent did he carry his desire? When the brave commander, with that inflexibility which characterises the sailor, refused that unheard-of wish, the lieutenant, Pierre Huet, drew his poniard and struck his commander, in one of those decisive moments when the most perfect discipline is requisite to ensure safety, before the whole of the crew. You shudder, gentlemen; you are horrified. What will you do, then, when you learn all? The corvette, through the ignorance of one of the officers, was placed in danger. At that moment, when the presence of the commander is like a watch-tower, to guide and direct the vessel through the perilous rocks—when he can discern, with his keen eye, a route of safety, and which appears to the crew as if the hand of God had pointed it out to him."

At the conclusion of this sentence, which was pronounced with emphasis by the little advocate, he took a long breath; then added —

“It was at this moment, gentlemen, that, believing his brave and inflexible commander would again oppose his views, he, the said Pierre Huet, gentlemen, shut the commander up in his cabin, thereby depriving the crew of the skill of their talented commander, who, according to the account given by the culprit himself, would have probably been capable of withdrawing the vessel from its perilous situation. Does it not appear to you, then, gentlemen, that the said Pierre Huet, having knowingly deprived the corvette of the skill of her commander, is responsible for the loss of the vessel?”

“This last document has been transmitted to us by the brave Marquis of Longetour himself, who, by clemency worthy of his excellent character, tries, as far as possible, to extenuate the crimes of his lieutenant. I may mention here, gentlemen, the vicissitudes to which this act of insubordination subjected the worthy commander, who, as I mentioned, was abandoned in the midst of the greatest peril. With courage natural to him, he waited patiently in his cabin; pirates took possession of the vessel, found him, and took him into the heart of Africa. Notwithstanding the numerous dangers to which he was exposed, the worthy commander devoted his leisure hours to the study of natural history: thus linking the perseverance and assiduity of a man of study and of courage, with the seaman.

“But, gentlemen, let us return to a picture less consoling for humanity; let us return to the prisoner and his crimes. It is, then, gentlemen, in the name of that discipline which has been so disgracefully outraged, that I protest against any good feeling which may start up in your minds. My accusation, gentlemen, is based on facts. The conduct of the culprit, Pierre Huet, cannot be looked over on the ground of a father's affection for a son. Look at the example it would be setting. I will conclude with a simple, yet very expressive phrase—Before acting as a father, one ought to remember the duties of an officer.”

At these words Pierre startled.

“Gentlemen,” the little man added, “I demand the application of the penal code against the culprit, Pierre Huet.

“1. His insubordination towards his commander.

“2. Attempting to murder his commander while in the exercise of his duty.

“3. For having, at a time of danger, locked his commander up in his cabin; and, abandoning the vessel, left him there to perish.”

The little man sat down.

"Prisoner, have you anything to say in your defence?" demanded the admiral, with an expression of anxiety.

"No, sir."

"Have you a counsel?"

"No, sir."

"You persist in your silence?"

"Yes, sir; only I declare, before God and man, that if I had not been rendered senseless by a fall before leaving the corvette, my commander would not have been left in his cabin."

"But why did you shut him up in it?"

"I cannot, sir, reply to that question."

The president left the room, with the members of the council.

Pierre alone remained, with his head in his hands. The few surviving *firebrands* had been taken as witnesses; but, after giving their testimony, they were sent on shore.

The council re-entered; and the president read what follows with an affected voice:—

"Louis, King of France and Navarre, by the grace of God," &c.

"To-day, the 20th of November, 1815, a council of war assembled at the port of Cherbourg, in one of the Admiralty's vessels, by virtue of the ordonnance of his majesty, when Pierre Huet, ex-lieutenant of the Royal Navy, after careful deliberation, was convicted of having attempted to assassinate his commander; and the council passed, in strict accordance with their conscience, the sentence of Death upon the said Pierre Huet. The execution of the sentence to take place in twenty-four hours."

Pierre remained silent; nor did the least emotion disturb his countenance. Addressing the president, he, at length, said, "Admiral, will you accord me a private interview for a few seconds?"

"I am at your service, sir. Gentlemen, please to withdraw."

"Admiral," said Pierre, "do you remember me?"

"Yes, Pierre," said the officer, holding out his hand. "I have seen you at the cannon's mouth, and I know well what you are. There is something inexplicable in all this; for I never knew any one more rigid in regard to discipline than yourself."

"Admiral, I have a son."

"Pierre, don't be uneasy about his future prospects."

"His future prospects!" said Pierre, sadly. "He will kill himself."

"My friend, that idea——"

* "He will shoot himself, admiral!" interrupted Pierre. "I know it; only I should not like us to be separated, you understand."

"My friend Pierre, I do not participate in your fears. Your son——"

"Will kill himself. So, admiral, let a prayer be offered up for us both. I never was a canter, but I am certain there is a God above us. That's all, admiral."

"Should the misfortune which you anticipate take place, on the faith of a sailor your wishes shall be fulfilled."

"Thanks, admiral," said Pierre, with a grateful look; then holding out his hand, he added, "Adieu!"

"Come to my arms, my brave fellow," said the admiral. "It is not the first time. Was it not I who dubbed you a legionary?"

"Adieu! adieu! admiral," said Pierre, after an affectionate embrace. "Think of us."

The admiral said, "Be assured; I have given my word." Then retired.

Pierre went to his room, but his son was not there. He sat down where he had last seen Paul, and spent the night in meditation.

CHAPTER LI.

THE VISIT.

Paul was conducted by Gratien to his lodgings, in the Rue Chasse-Marcé.

It was evening; and the following day was the one fixed upon for putting a terminatton to Pierre's life. The signal was, the striking of eleven upon the clock of the port.

The little chamber occupied by Paul was one generally taken by sailors when waiting to embark in some commercial ship. The walls were covered with yellow-flowered paper, and overhung with pictures representing the exploits of Bonaparte. A chair, a broken-legged table, and a small bed, comprised the furniture of this miserable abode.

Paul, seated on his bed, his hands on his knees, and his head hanging downwards, appeared to be in a state of insensibility.

Four o'clock struck; the prolonged tinglings seemed to awaken him from his reverie.

"Four o'clock!" said he, after having counted each stroke. "What is my father doing at present? Still, nineteen hours to wait! It is a long time! I like that clock, for it will tell me the moment of my father's death. It will ask me, 'Paul, art thou ready? he is waiting for thee.' It will not deceive me Oh no! To-morrow, the last stroke of eleven will be the har binger of joy to him and to me; for it will be the signal at which we shall be united for ever. But what can I do till then?"

I am so sad, so comfortless! Oh! I trust that I will not be again attacked by one of those fainting fits. No, no," he added, bitterly, "Heaven is too good to refuse me this happiness.

"Ah! six months ago, who would have thought this! What a fatal life is mine! What have I done to God, to merit such wretchedness? Yes! I pictured to myself such a happy future; for I had then a father, whom I loved. I was young, brave, pleased with my profession, and I loved—oh! I loved an angel!"

A few minutes' silence ensued; then he added—

"How strange and frightful it is! I do not know whether grief, vexation, or disease, has dried up the fibres of my heart! I no longer feel. I think of Alice—of my father, who will be shot to-morrow—of myself, who will die with him—without the least painful or cruel emotion. The past, the present, and the future, are like a dream—a book, the perusal of which has engraved on my memory recollections, but no keen impressions. I feel only tired and inert; having only one desire—that is, for the morrow!

"No, no!" he added, after a short silence. "I have thought enough of all that was dear to me—of all my hopes, that are blasted; I have tried to open the wounds that formerly were so quick and painful; but, no! I experience nothing—nor hatred, nor despair, nor regret. My soul is dead to all sensations!

"It is the effect of extreme grief, without doubt; perhaps, that of disease; still, it is strange: perhaps it is caused from the certitude of death—from knowing, that to-morrow, at eleven, I shall have breathed my last. I have no desire: I am inert; a prey to ennui!"

At this moment a slight noise was heard at the door.

"Ah! it is my good old Gratien. He comes to prevent me from leaving the room, as if I thought of doing so."

The door was opened, and some one advanced in the obscurity; for night was come.

"Is that you, Gratien?" demanded Paul.

"No, Paul," replied a well-known voice, which made the young midshipman startle.

"Saffie!" exclaimed the young man stupified.

CHAPTER LII.

PROPOSITION.

On hearing the sound of that man's voice which brought to his recollection his most poignant anguish, Paul felt his deadened heart think. The poor lad thought that a feeling of

hatred was about to rise in his heart; but no—all the springs of his soul had been broken. That slight emotion was created through surprise, which lasted but a moment; then he fell again into a state of morbid insensibility.

Gratien appeared, with a lamp.

"Leave us," said Paul.

Gratien left the room.

Szaflie, emaciated through privations which he had also shared, was paler than usual; but he still possessed his calm and composed air, with his haughty and sarcastic expression of countenance.

"Well, Paul!" he said, advancing.

"When you entered, sir," said Paul, calmly, "I thought I felt a feeling of rage rising in my bosom; but I was deceived. You must despise me, in finding me so cowardly and base," added the poor lad, with a bitter smile, "for I see you near me, at my side, and I have not the power nor the desire to kill you. Do you understand that?"

"Yes, Paul; that is as it ought to be. After the greatest felicitude, the greater are the sufferings; after great afflictions, morbidity, moral insensibility. What gamblers say of the gambling-table, is applicable to the soul. There are two pleasures in gambling—first, the pleasure of gaining; second, the pleasure of losing; for it is a hundred times better to lose, than not to play. So it is a hundred times better to suffer, than to be in that lethargy into which you are plunged."

"Oh! that is too true; for, if I suffered, I would hate you; and if I could hate you, I would kill you; but I cannot."

"Listen to me. About eight years ago, like you, Paul, I was on the point of killing myself; like you, I had a heart cold and deadened. The only difference that existed was, that the satiety of felicity brought me to where the satiety of misfortune has led you—to suicide. I come to propose those measures to you, which saved me; for I am interested in you, Paul."

"What do you say?"

"Once your father is dead; and supposing that you recover from that torpid state which now overwhelms you; what will be, do you think, the first sentiment that will rise in your soul?"

Paul reflected an instant; then, he replied—"Hate, and I desire to revenge myself on you."

"Hatred of man, truly. As to your desire of revenging yourself upon me, it is stupid, unjust. For, after all, Paul, was I the bringer-about of certain events? Was it I who said to your father, 'Worship an imaginary discipline, and sacrifice for thy idol, honour, ambition, thy son, and thy life?' Was it I who said to Alice, 'Despise and torture the young, candid, and tender heart of Paul; and love me?' No. I said to Alice

‘There is a heart, young, pure, and chaste, like thine; seek it, understand it, and love it; for my heart, young girl, is sombre, hollow, and shrivelled.’ Well, in spite of that, Paul, she came to me, and shunned you; such is the nature of woman: because Alice, nurtured in a convent, and possessing all her noble convictions, preferred me; and she did so on account of these virtues. A woman who had been corrupted, would not have hesitated a minute, but would have at once made you her choice.

“Thou speakest of killing me, Paul. Was it I, or was it hunger, that changed submission into revolt, love into hatred, modesty into open desire? Did I not share the privations? and as yours, was not my life at stake? The only advantage that I had was the power of seeing all with calmness; for I told you that nothing astonishes me, because I expect everything.”

“Then, what do you want with me?” said Paul, with indifference.

“Listen, Paul. Thou art only sixteen, handsome, courageous. To hate the world, thou hast reasons the most strong that ever fatality showered upon the head of man. Thy desire for vengeance must be keen and implacable; for man has deprived thee of a father, of a mistress, and of the hopes of the future.

“Come with me, Paul. I am rich. My experience will be of use to thee. We will unite in a brotherhood of hatred against man. Come, Paul, thou art the only human being in whom I could interest myself, because thou alone can serve my projects, and render them complete. Come! A woman deceived thee! Well, so young, so handsome, so soon disabused, women will fall at thy feet and worship thee. Then, Paul, thou shalt make them shed floods of tears, and they will feel their hearts rending within their breasts. Yes, Paul; all the sufferings that thou hast endured, thou shalt impose them upon humanity. Thy heart has been lacerated; women shall feel the reaction; innocent or guilty, it matters not. Thou hast wept tears of blood, and they shall do the same. Come, come, Paul! If love has given thee power of crushing that sex, ambition will stimulate your revenge upon man. I will open a vast career in places of honour, by which, means will be afforded us to bear down upon humanity, for we shall domineer men with frightful haughtiness; thy soul will expand, my lad; and who knows but the weal or woe of nations may be within our grasp? Do you understand, Paul? Nations. We may then utter a shriek of vengeance that will find its echo in posterity. Come, Paul! And if that which I have depicted is too limited, there is at Rome a powerful lever. Thou art not married, nor I either.

“Come, I tell thee! Is vengeance not a sweet draught for

you, Paul, who have been robbed of a father and a mistress? Think, then, Paul, *humanity*! What an immense hecatomb to their ashes! Come, Paul! leave this city, and accompany me to Paris. Come! come!"

"No, no; I must die—die here, with my father."

"But, stupid lad, thy death will hurt no one. It is the act of a fool to revenge the injuries inflicted by humanity on thyself."

"You see, Szaffie, I have listened to you with attention; with attention I endeavoured to discover if any of your words excited a feeling of hatred, hope, or despair; but my heart remained dead, without one single emotion."

"Thou art sure of it?"

"I am sure of it."

"Poor Paul! I pity thee, then; for I relied upon thee. I ought, however, to have expected as much. Yes! yes! it requires a powerful mind to resist extreme happiness or complete wretchedness. Thy soul is weak and frail. Once more reflect! Interrogate thy heart! Anything? anything?"

"Nothing!" replied Paul, pensively. "Nothing! Nor do I understand how a man can wish to live when the world is a desert to him."

"Vengeance, Paul! vengeance!"

"But I have no feeling of revenge. No, no; my heart is dead—dead."

"Adieu, then, Paul."

"Adieu!"

A tear of sorrow or regret moistened, for the first time, the eyes of Szaffie.

There was something truly frightful in the sight of that young man, so handsome, so pale!—dying!—already dead! For physical death is a thing of little importance. To see that poor young man, alone, in his wretched chamber, without a friend, without a parent, isolated in the midst of the world; having, in raising the cup of life to his lips, tasted only bitterness, and laying it down without complaint, without a murmur, without even shedding a tear.

"Adieu, then!" said Szaffie; and he disappeared.

"Adieu!" said Paul, who looked at his watch. He added—
"Another hour has passed away!"

The sound of the postilion's whip was heard, and the window of the wretched cabin shook with the noise of the carriage as it drove hastily away.

CHAPTER LIII

GRATIEN.

Next morning, at eight o'clock, Paul called Gratien.

The old seaman entered.

"Listen, my old friend," said Paul, pulling out the table-drawer. "Here are five thousand and some odd francs. It is all the wealth that my father and I possess. Take it."

"Thanks, M. Paul."

"You know, when dead, we no longer require money."

"Yes, M. Paul."

"My father will be shot at eleven o'clock."

"Yes, M. Paul."

"Therefore I shall kill myself at eleven o'clock. You do not answer me; still, I trust upon your securing me arms."

"M. Paul——"

"Would you have me to strangle myself with my cravat, or dash my brains out against the pavement?"

"No, M. Paul."

"Well, then, if you prevent me to-day, to-morrow or the next day I will find both time and means. So——"

"Yes, M. Paul."

"When a child you carried me in your arms, Gratien. Was it not so?"

"Yes, M. Paul," said the old man, whose heart swelled at the recollection. Then he added—"And how often have I made you ride upon my wooden leg!"

"Well, my good Gratien, you loved me then."

"That I did, M. Paul."

"Well, do not refuse me now what I ask you. Would you be pleased if a friend refused to render you a service? If, for instance, you had had both legs shot off instead of one, and certain that you could not survive, would you have been satisfied if your comrade had refused to aid you in putting a termination to your sufferings?"

"That, M. Paul, is a sacred duty, which we are, in duty, bound to perform one to another. When we can spare a friend unnecessary pain, we must do so; he who refuses is a miserable coward."

"Well, Gratien, I am your friend, and you refuse me—the son of your lieutenant—you refuse me, whom you have nursed in your arms, that which you would not deny a comrade; you refuse me that, when you know that my father will be shot to-morrow. You are aware that I cannot survive him—that the sufferance would be too great for me. You refuse me; you would rather see me die of grief than from a ball, which is the

honourable death of a soldier. Now tell me, my good Gratien. No; you cannot refuse me.

"Stop, M. Paul. No, no; since you wish it. For I think that after the death of your father your grief would not cease—that your life would be wretched, my poor M. Paul."

"You see that I am right, my good Gratien; so buy me a pair of pistols, and load them yourself. You understand."

"I understand," said Gratien, wiping a tear from his eye.

"Go; and be back by half-past ten. I rely upon you, Gratien."

"You have the word of a sailor, M. Paul," said Gratien, after a short hesitation. Then he left.

Nine o'clock struck.

Ten o'clock.

At a quarter past ten Paul heard the sound of several footsteps on the stairs.

A frown wrinkled his brow; for the idea of Gratien making known his intention flashed across his mind; but the old man entered alone, carrying the pistols under his jacket.

"M. Paul," said he, somewhat embarrassed; and looking first at the one pistol, then at the other. "M. Paul, you told me not to say anything about the matter to any one."

"I certainly gave you that order. What have you done?"

"M. Paul, I met La Joie and Bouquin in the street, who told me that they would like to see you before——"

"Let them come in, Gratien."

La Joie and Bouquin advanced timidly.

"Well, my old firebrands," said Paul, "you come to take a last adieu."

"Oh, M. Paul!" replied La Joie. "One never forgets him whom we dearly love. It was I, M. Paul, that first taught you to splice a rope. It was I who caught you in my arms when you were wounded; and you remembered all well; for you never abused old La Joie, as many young officers would have done. And then it is sad to think, M. Paul, that after you and the lieutenant are gone, there are only Bouquin and I left, of all the brave firebrands of the Salamander! For Gratien has told me all; and it is brave of you, M. Paul; and you act like a good and a brave sailor. No one, except women and curates, will say that you have done wrong. Only, M. Paul, Bouquin and I should like——; but I dare not ask you."

"Come, La Joie, what is it?"

"Well, M. Paul, we should like to have something belonging to you; a button of your uniform; anything. Excuse me, M. Paul! Bouquin and I would look upon it as a sacred relic."

"You shall have something, La Joie."

The clock struck half-past ten.

"Come, my old friends," said Paul, "you must leave. Eleven is the fixed hour. Adieu! adieu! not a word to any one."

"Rely upon us, M. Paul."

Bouquin and La Joie, with tears in their eyes, took an affectionate leave of Paul, who, turning round to Gratien, said, "And you, too, my old friend, must leave me."

"My poor M. Paul!" said the old sailor; and all three left the apartment.

A few minutes afterwards Paul wrote the following lines:—

"I shoot myself, because I cannot survive the death of my father. I bequeath to Jacques Gratien, sailor, all the money that I possess. It is also my last wish that La Joie, boatswain, should have my poniard, which will be found in my father's chamber, on board the Admiralty's ship; and that my marling spike should be given to Bouquin, as tokens of friendship and of gratitude towards those brave sailors. I also desire to be buried with my father.

"Executed on the 13th of November, at ten minutes to eleven, A.M.; five minutes prior to the death of my father.

"PAUL HUET."

At the first stroke of eleven Paul took up the pistols. His last words were—

"Pardon me, Oh God, if I have committed a crime! Father, I am with thee! My mother! Alice!"

At the last stroke of eleven a ball pierced the heart of Pierre Huet, who fell lifeless upon the ponton.

At the last stroke of eleven Paul Huet fell lifeless upon the floor of the Chasse-Marée Auberge.

The admiral did not forget the promise he had made to his companion in arms. Pierre and his son were interred in one grave.

The Admiral, Gratien, Bouquin, and La Joie alone followed the funeral of the father and son.

In the evening the three sailors, who, resorting to a tavern, and getting excited with wine, spoke of setting fire to the port of Cherbourg, by way of revenging the death of the father and son. Their threats, however, were not carried into execution.

Gratien enjoyed ease and comfort, till death put a period to his life.

La Joie fell overboard during a storm, and was drowned.

His comrade, Bouquin, died of the yellow fever at Martinique.

CHAPTER LIV.

A SALOON.

The following scene transpired at the hotel de St. Arc, a month after the death of Pâtl and his father.

The hotel of St. Arc is one of those old and admirable buildings of the Faubourg St. Germain that bear the date of the seventeenth century. The rich carvings of the doors and windows had been recently regilt; the windows, screened with purple curtains, looked into a garden; while, a little to the left, was a hot-house, from which arose the sweetest odours.

It was night.

The gorgeous saloon was magnificently lighted up, and rays of light were cast upon several family portraits, which showed the ancient pedigree of the present proprietor.

Six o'clock struck.

A valet opened the folding doors, and the Duchess of St. Arc, a lady of fifty years of age, of an imposing appearance, entered, accompanied by the Countess Hermilly, a lovely young woman, who had scarcely reached her eighteenth year, and who had been about a year married to Count Hermilly.

"How good you are, my dear Marie," said the duchess, "for coming so soon, and thereby sparing me the *ennui* of my toilette, by relating to me your amusing adventures."

"Amusing adventures! you say. Why, M. Hermilly is always complaining of my serious turn of mind."

"He is right, Marie; for you mistake your age."

"No; it is he who mistakes his."

"The fact is," said the duchess, "that he is wrong in thinking himself young at thirty, in being full of humour, and one of the happiest men in the world! his engaging manners, and handsome and elegant mien, may partly account for this. How foolish you are, for which I must scold you severely. Would you have him to be like M. Servieux, who is always sad and preoccupied, always dull and drowsy?"

"Shall he be here to-night, that dear M. de Servieux, my mother's old friend?"

"Yes; but that is not all. I shall have a personage here of great celebrity, who has recently arrived at Paris."

"Ah! who is that?" demanded the countess, with curiosity.

"The Marquis of Longetour, a relation of M. de St. Arc, who is a sailor, a real Jean Bart. His history is quite a romance."

"Pray, tell me all about him," said the countess, beseechingly.

"My dear child, his story is too long: only it is said that he was captured by pirates, taken into the heart of Africa, where

he saw the greatest curiosities in the world, and made several important discoveries in natural history, for which the Académie des Sciences purpose making him one of their body. But what is still nobler in his character is, that he was made prisoner because he would not leave his vessel, although it was a complete wreck. The crew abandoned it, and he had the courage to remain there alone. Sailors have a singular love for their vessels."

"There's fidelity and constancy!" exclaimed the young lady. "Is he married?"

"Yes. He is mild and simple; but one of those redoubtable men, who never show their real character but when surrounded by imminent perils. Indeed, one of those men who spurn obstacles, from which they seem to gather strength."

"I should like to see your worthy sailor."

"I am very much attached to him, and I am proud that I will be able to inform him to-day, that, as a recompence for his noble and valiant conduct, a superior grade will be accorded him. He has been, I am told, highly recommended by the passenger that was going with him to Smyrna. But his life is another romance."

"Another!"

"Yes. M. de Longetour introduced me to him; and I must say, Marie, that he is one of the most singular men that I ever met."

"Is he another old sailor—gruff and ugly, with a face tanned by the sun?"

"No, Marie; he is not more than thirty, of rare beauty, with an original and intellectual mind. He is an admirable musician, and paints like an angel!"

"He is indeed, then," said the countess, laughing, "the hero of a romance."

"Especially as he belongs to a highly influential family, possesses a large fortune, and keeps a handsome carriage, and the finest horses in Paris. With all this, you can only form an imperfect idea of M. Szaffie."

"M. Szaffie! I have heard a great deal about that man. Shall you receive him at your house?"

"I know that wicked or envious people spread a report about some elopement under dreadful circumstances, and his causing poor Baroness de Pavy, and a hundred others, to die of grief."

"You believe, then, that these reports are false."

"A proof that I place no credence in these scandalous reports, my dear Marie, is, that M. Szaffie will be made welcome here."

A valet entered, announcing the Chevalier Servieux.

"How amiable you are, M. Servieux, to come so soon," said

the duchess. "Still, your sad look! Thinking gravely of the future, eh? Here is one, however, who is admirably disposed to listen to you."

"It is a deadly strife, Madame," said M. Servieux, smiling. "But admit, at least, that sadness in an old man is often effected by the conscience or by abnegation. However, through a spirit of contradiction, I shall be gay to-day. Perhaps it is less the desire of contrariety that will effect this revolution in my mind, than the certitude that the intelligence of which I am the bearer will be agreeable to you."

"What do you mean, Chevalier?" demanded the duchess.

"I do not allude to good acts that might be committed; nor of your morning visits, of which the poor alone know the secret; nor of the gratitude of the widows of those officers who fell at Waterloo, whom you so generously aid; nor——"

"M. de Servieux!" said the duchess, impatiently.

"Madame. To the point. I simply bring a note from the ministry."

The duchess took the note and read:—"The promotion of the Marquis of Longetour to the grade of admiral, and his appointment to the commandership of the legion of honour, have been signed to-day."

"A thousand thanks, my dear M. Servieux."

"No thanks, Madame. It is only justice that is awarded him. That worthy officer battled, with invincible courage, the most perilous dangers; and, when there was no longer a resource left, by an admirable fanaticism he refused to leave the vessel which the king had confided to him; remained in it; and expiated that sublime devotedness by a frightful captivity in the deserts of Africa, where he spent his time and talent in rendering himself useful to science. You will acknowledge, madame, his noble nature. Such is what I have been told; and I have it from good authority. That is not all. This brave man had for his lieutenant a fellow of a dangerous character, who endeavoured to assassinate him before the crew; no doubt, to free himself from the rigid discipline exacted by the loyal commander. Still, he endeavoured to save this man from his merited punishment."

A valet entered with a letter.

"Will you permit me, Monsieur Servieux?"

"Certainly; certainly."

"It is vexing," said the duchess, after she had perused the letter; "but," she added, laughing, "it is all for the best. I will see the marquis again; but I don't think my eyes will ever meet such another epistle. What strange beings these sailors are! But, they say, that all men of courage and of superior minds are governed by their wives. Read this, M. de Servieux, and I will defy you

to make us dull afterwards. It will make you laugh also, Marie. How pensive you seem!"

"Not at all," said the countess.

M. de Servieux took the letter, and read aloud:—

"My dear Madame, you know, between friends and relations familiarity is allowable. I must tell you that I shall not have the pleasure of dining with you to-day. It is not my will, but that of my devil of an Elizabeth, of my cursed wife, whom you know well. I have beseeched and menaced, but cannot affect her. I do not know from what caprice, but she will not permit me to visit you to-day; and when I told her that I would do so, either with or against her will, she shut me up in a room, double-locked the door, and it is in my prison that I write this letter, which I threw over the window to a porter, telling him to take it immediately to the hotel Saint Arc. Do not expect me, then, my dear madame; for I would be disconsolate if I thought that you believed me ungrateful, after all the kindness which you have showered upon me since my return from Tripoli. I wrote you from Toulon, acquainting you of my speedy arrival in France; but I find the letter in Elizabeth's desk which she, no doubt, had forgotten. Do not expect me, then, my dear relative; and pity a prisoner. If I had been on board my vessel, it would not have been thus. Do not let Elizabeth know anything of this, I beseech you. I learnt, on my arrival, that my lieutenant had been shot. It is a sad misfortune; for he was a brave man. I would have given all I had in the world to have saved him. So, Madame, the steps which I prayed you to take in his regard are now useless, and I am sad, sad at heart for his fate."

"Excellent man!" said the duchess. "He still pities his lieutenant."

"It is a strange thing, yet still a fact," said M. Servieux, "that these men of iron—those who evince the most redoubtable courage when surrounded by dangers—are the most puerile in private life."

"He is a Hercules at the feet of Omphale, M. Servieux," said the duchess, laughing. "But we must answer the poor marquis." Then, ringing the bell, she ordered pen, ink, and paper.

"My dear relative," she wrote, "I take a lively interest in your captivity; and, to appease your ennui, I send you a note from the ministry. After all, it consoles me a little to hear that your wife can expiate all that despotism which you exact on board.

"I hope to see you soon, for Madame de Longetour cannot remain always merciless. A thousand marks of friendship and esteem.

"DUCHESS OF ST. ARC."

"Take this letter," said the duchess to the valet.

"Oh, I would pity him," said M. de Servieux, "if Elizabeth intercepted the letter. She would know all."

"It would subject him to a bread and water diet; who knows?——"

The valet entered, announcing the duke and M. Szaffie.

At the sound of the latter, the Countess d'Hermilly suddenly turned her head round and inwardly exclaimed, "It is he! Yes! yes! Oh, how handsome he is!"

THE END

KERNOK,
THE CORSAIR.

KERNOK, THE CORSAIR.

CHAPTER I.

THE SKINNER AND THE SORCERESS.

It was a cold dark night in November. The wind was blowing fiercely from the northwest, and the rocks of granite that bound the coast of Pompoul were lashed by the billows of the ocean, their jagged summits now disappearing beneath the waves, now developing themselves in black points above the dazzling foam.

Between two rocks stood, sheltered from the fury of the storm, a miserable looking cabin whose approach was rendered loathsome by the heaps of bones, skins, and offal of animals that were scattered about, which plainly announced that the proprietor of this abode was a skinner.

The hut door was opened, and a woman with a hamper in her hand, appeared, enveloped in a black mantle, that left no part of her exposed, save a yellow wrinkled visage which was partly concealed by her long grey locks.

"Pen-Ouet! Pen-Ouet!" she cried in an angry tone. By St. Paul, don't you know that this is the hour when evil spirits wander on the shore?"

No answer was returned, and nothing was heard, but the howling of the tempest, which now redoubled its fury.

"Pen-Ouet!" she again cried.

Pen-Ouet, an idiot boy, at length heard the voice of his mother. He was squatted beside a heap of bones, which he was busy piling up in the most fantastic manner imaginable. Rising with an air of discontent, like a child that is loth to leave its play, he returned to the cabin carrying with him the well polished skull of a horse, with which he was much delighted, for, by the introduction of several pebbles, whenever he shook the skull, it produced a pleasing sound.

"Come in, accursed creature!" cried his mother, pushing him so violently, that his head, striking against the wall, bled profusely. The idiot burst into a horse laugh, wiped the wound with his long black hair, and then went and squatted himself by the fireside.

"Ivonne, Ivonne! think of your soul, instead of shedding the blood of your son!" shouted the skinner, who was on his knees, apparently, in profound meditation. "Do you not hear?"

"I hear the voice of the tempest, and the noise of the waves lashing against this rock."

"Say, rather, the voices of the departed! By St. Jean! this is a day of death! and the drowned that we have . . ." (here he paused) "may bring to our door the Kariguel-ancou, with its white sheets and its red tears!" added he, in a low, trembling voice.

[Kariguel-ancou, according to popular tradition, is the carriage of death, which is said to be drawn by skeletons.]

"Tush! what have we to fear? Have we not Pen-Ouet, with us! and don't you know that evil spirits never approach a roof which shelters an idiot?"

"Then, why have I had, ever since the last shipwreck—since the lugger which came upon our coast was deceived by our false signals—why, I ask, have I had, ever since, a burning fever, and such frightful dreams? In vain have I drunk at midnight of the fountain of Krignoëk! nothing can cool me, or banish my fears! Ah, Ivonne! Ivonne! it was your fault!"

"Always afraid! Must we not live? Has your employment not rendered you obnoxious to every one in Sant-Pol? Are we not forbidden to enter the church? and is it not with difficulty that we get the bakers to sell us their bread? Pen-Ouet, poor idiot, never goes to town, but he returns covered with bruises. Why, if they dared, they would hunt us like wolves, on the mountains of Arnes; and because, in picking up what is wrecked on the coast, we avail ourselves of what Teus's (the evil spirit of the tempest) sends us, you must go down on your knees like a sacristan, and turn as pale as a girl, that meets Teus's Arpouliek, with two-three heads and his flashing eye!"

"Ivonne!"

"Yes, you are more timid than a Cournaille!" added she, greatly exasperated.

This is the bitterest insult that can be offered to a Leonais; so the skinner started up and griped his wife by the throat.

"Yes!" shouted she; "more cowardly than a child of the plain."

The rage of the skinner had no bounds; he seized an axe, and Ivonne armed herself with a knife.

The idiot laughed loudly, and shook the horse's skull, thereby producing a strange, hollow sound.

Fortunately, a knock was heard at the door; otherwise, mischief would have ensued.

"Open the door! thunder and lightning!" cried a rude voice. "Open the door, I say. Damnation! the north-east wind is strong enough to unhorn a bullock! Open the door!"

The skinner dropped his axe; and Ivonne, adjusting her dress, cast a fierce look on her husband.

Who can it be who comes to disturb us at this hour of the night?" said the skinner, approaching the window, and looking out.

CHAPTER II.

KERNOK.

It was the brave and worthy Kernok that knocked at the door; a brave and daring fellow he was. Judge of him.

Born at Plougasnou; at fifteen he left his paternal roof, embarking on board a slaver, where he soon became expert in the profession he had chosen. There was not a powder-monkey more active, nor sailor more intrepid, than Kernok; few had so piercing an eye for discovering land under a fog, and none could reef a topsail with more dexterity or grace. And how generous was his disposition! If an officer carelessly laid his purse aside, Kernok was sure to show his dexterity in picking it up; but he always shared its contents with his comrades, as he did also with the captain's rum, whenever it came within his reach.

His tenderness and humanity, too, were most exemplary. How often, on a voyage from Africa to the Carribee Islands, when the negroes—their limbs stiffened with the cold and damp of the hold—were unable to crawl on deck to inhale the fresh air; how often, I say, has young Kernok restored warmth to their shivering frames, by making them keep step to the sound of the lash! This conduct used even to call forth the approbation of M. Durand, the gunner, surgeon, and carpenter of the brigantine, who truly remarked, that none under the superintendence of Kernok was ever afflicted with that drowsiness and torpor which affected the others. On the contrary, whenever they caught sight of the lash, they were seized with a fit of nervous excitement, which M. Durand considered exceedingly salutary.

Kernok soon obtained the confidence and esteem of the captain of the slaver, who, capable of appreciating his rare qualities, grew fond of him, instructed him in the theory of his profession; and one fine morning, when in as fine a humour, he promoted him to be second in command.

The young sailor proved himself, by his courage and intrepidity, worthy of promotion. He found out such an advantageous method of stowing away the negroes, that the vessel, which had hitherto only carried two hundred, was, by his ingenuity, made to carry three. This he accomplished by politely requesting them to lie close together on their sides, instead of lolling about on their backs like so many pachas.

From that day the captain predicted that his protégé would fulfil a high destiny. God knows whether this prediction has been verified!

A few years rolled on. They were sailing, one evening, with a fair wind, towards the coast of Africa. Kernok's worthy captain having made somewhat free with the rum, was in excellent humour, and, seating himself at the cabin window, began to amuse himself, now observing the progress of the thick clouds of smoke that rose curling from his mouth, now watching the swift motion of the vessel, which every moment brought him nearer to his native land.

Then he thought of the beautiful plains of Normandy, and fancied he saw, gilded by the rays of the setting sun, the thatched cottage in which he first drew breath; the clear streamlet that ran murmuring by; his wife, his mother, and his little children, who were anxious for his return—longing for the pretty birds and beautiful dresses that he was wont to bring with him from distant climes.

Poor fellow! he fancied he saw all this: and his pipe, that long use had rendered as black as a raven, dropped from his mouth; his eyes became moistened with tears; his heart throbbed violently; and, by degrees, his imagination, aided a little, perhaps, by the rum, gave to this bright vision an appearance of reality, and the worthy captain, taking the ocean for the smiling plain which he sighed after, thought he would have a loll upon the sward, leaped upon the cabin window, and fell into the sea.

Some say that an invisible hand pushed him, and that the track of the vessel was for a moment died with blood!

One thing certain; he was seen no more.

The brigantine was at this time near the isles of Cape Verd. The sea was running high, the wind blowing fresh; so the helmsman heard nothing; but Kernok, who had gone to give the captain an account of the vessel's course, discovered the accident, to which, in all probability, he was no stranger.

Kernok was one of those strong-minded men who are inaccessible to the mean considerations which some silly people term pity or gratitude; so, when he appeared on deck, there was not the slightest trace of emotion visible on his countenance. "The captain is drowned," said he, calmly, addressing the boatswain's mate; "it's a pity, for he was . . ." We

refrain from giving the epithet, which felicitously terminated his laconic funeral oration. Then, fixing his eyes on the steersman, he added—

“The command of the vessel falls to me, as second in rank; therefore, change the course. Instead of going south-east, put the head of the vessel to north-west, and steer for Nantes or St. Malo.

The fact is, Kernok had often, but in vain, endeavoured to persuade the deceased captain to abandon the slave trade; not from any motive of philanthropy; oh, no; but from a motive much more powerful in the eyes of a rational man.

“Captain!” Kernok used to say, “you do not gain, at the most, more than three hundred per cent. on the money you advance; whereas, if I were in your place—if I were master—look you—I would gain as much—aye, more—without advancing a penny. Your vessel sails like a goldenis. Fit her out as a privateer; I will answer for the crew; only allow me to act, and I promise that the song of the bold pirate will resound at every capture we make.”

The eloquence of Kernok could not move the captain; for he was a sagacious dog, and was well aware that, whoever embraced this noble profession in times of peace, was sure, sooner or later, to finish his career by dangling at the yard-arm. So the obdurate captain fell into the sea by *accident*.

When Kernok reached Nantes, the brigantine was soon fitted out in the way he so much desired; a crew was speedily secured, the vessel armed, and, with a proud heart, Kernock saw himself about to enter on his favourite project.

Providence seemed to smile on his exertions; for, soon afterwards, war was declared between England and France. Kernok having procured a suitable crew, put out to sea, captured a three-masted merchantman, and carried his prize to St. Pol de Léon.

What shall I say more? Fortune always favoured him; he took many prizes from the English; and the money thus acquired vanished rapidly in the taverns of St. Pol; and, on the night in which he disturbed the respectable family of the skinner, he was about to put out to sea again, in order to recruit his exhausted finances.

“Sacrebleu! open, I say!” repeated he, shaking the door almost off its hinges. A few minutes afterwards the door was opened.

CHAPTER III.

FORTUNE-TELLING.

Kernok entered the hut, took off his oil-skin jacket, shook his hat, which was dripping wet, then threw himself on a crazy bench by the fire-side.

The corsair was about thirty years of age. His bulky, square form, bespoke great strength; and his sun-burnt features, black hair, and large whiskers, gave him a somewhat stern and savage appearance. Yet he would have been deemed rather handsome, had it not been for the extraordinary motion of his eyebrows, which moved at every impulse of his mind. His dress resembled that of a common sailor, save that he wore two golden anchors embossed on his jacket-collar, and had a large cutlass fastened to his belt, with a red silken cord.

The skinner and his wife, eyeing the stranger with fear and suspicion, waited anxiously to hear the object of his visit; but Kernok appeared only to think of warming himself; and as he took some pieces of wood up to throw on the fire, he said, "Ah! these belong to some vessel that you have lured to her ruin! Ah! if ever the *Epervier*——"

"What do you mean?" interrupted Ivonne.

The corsair raised his head and looked disdainfully, without uttering a word; then, stretching his legs across the fireplace with as much freedom as if he had been in one of the taverns of St. Pol, he said,

"You are Pen-Hap, the skinner; are you not, my good fellow? And you," said he, addressing Ivonne, "are the sorceress of the coast of Pampoul?"

Then, eyeing the idiot with an air of disgust, he added,

"As to this monster, if you were to take him to a meeting of witches, he would frighten the devil himself. He, however, resembles you, my good dame; and I fancy, if I had him for the figure-head of my vessel, the dolphins would never play and frolic again under her prow."

The features of Ivonne became distorted with passion.

"Come, my pretty hostess," resumed the corsair, "don't be angry; here's something," said he, shaking his purse, "that will soon appease you: for I require your assistance, as well as that of Monsieur."

This harangue, and, above all, the word "*Monsieur*," were pronounced with an air so evidently contemptuous, that it required the sight of a well-lined purse, the broad shoulders and iron-tipped stick of Kernok, to prevent the worthy couple from giving vent to their rage, which had been suppressed for some time.

"Not," added he, "that I believe in your sorceries. When a child, I trembled at old women's recitals; but now, I care as little about them, as I do about a broken oar. *She*, however, wishes me to have my fortune told before we go to sea again. Go about, then, Madame. Are you ready?"

At the word "Madame" the sorceress made a horrible grimace.

"I will not stay here, Ivonne! this is the day of the dead! Wife, wife, you will cause our ruin; you will bring down the vengeance of Heaven on us!" exclaimed the skinner, as he left the house in terror.

"The devil clutch him!" exclaimed Kernok, pushing her towards the door. "Run after him, you old screech owl! he knows the coast better than any pilot of the Isle of Batz. Away with you, vile sorceress! for I shall want his assistance."

"Do you come here to insult those that you wish to serve?" cried Ivonne. "Leave off, leave off! or you shall learn nothing from me."

"What is it you want?"

Kernok shrugged his shoulders with an air of indifference. "To know the past and the future; nothing but that, my worthy dame; which is as easy as it is to sail ten knots an hour in the teeth of the wind!"

"Your hand."

"There! Read away, my old dame; but I have about as much faith in the predictions of our steersman, who, when burning salt and gunpowder, pretends that he can tell what sort of weather it will be by the colour of the flame. I place more reliance on my cutlass; for, when I say thou shalt die, the steel or the iron accomplishes my prediction better than all your——"

"Silence!" cried Ivonne.

While Kernok was expressing his scepticism, the sorceress was examining the lines of his hand. She fixed her piercing grey eyes on the corsair, then placed her finger on his brow.

Kernok started at the touch of the sorceress.

"Ah!" said she, with a hideous laugh, "you tremble already."

"Tremble! hag! tremble! Do you think I can bear the touch of your cursed finger without shuddering? But if it were a soft, plump hand, you would see that——"

The corsair stopped, and lowered his eyes before the fixed and earnest gaze of the sorceress.

"Silence!" she exclaimed; then her head fell upon her breast, and she seemed absorbed in a profound reverie. At intervals her teeth chattered, and her whole frame shook convulsively.

The dying embers of the fire shed a reddish light over the apartment, the rays of which fell upon the frightful misshapen head of the idiot as he lay asleep in a corner; while nothing

was seen of the sorceress save her black mantle and long grey locks. The tempest was moaning without, and everything conspired to render this scene truly appalling.

Kernok felt a slight shudder pass through his frame with the rapidity of lightning. The superstition of his childhood gradually resumed its sway, and his features lost their air of sneering incredulity; large drops of perspiration gathered on his forehead, and his hand mechanically sought his dagger, which he drew from its scabbard.

"The devil choke Melie!" cried he; "and me too, fool that I am for humouring her silly scruples. What! shall I allow myself to be frightened by the mummeries that are used to scare women and children? Come, devil's bride! quick! for I must be off. Do you hear?" added he, shaking her violently.

The sorceress replied not; nor did she offer any resistance.

The corsair's heart beat violently.

"Will you speak?" said he, raising her head.

It remained in the position in which he had placed it; but the eyes were fixed and glazed. His hair now stood erect, and he seemed fascinated and subdued by a power that was superior to his strength.

"Kernok!" at length said the sorceress faintly, "throw, throw away that dagger; there is blood on it! the blood of *her* and of *him*!" She smiled hideously; and placing her finger on her neck, added, "You struck her here; still, she lives: but that is not all; where is the captain of the slaver?"

Kernok's dagger fell at his feet; he drew his hand across his burning brow, and leant, for support, against the cabin-hall.

The sorceress continued:

"That you threw your benefactor into the sea after stabbing him, is true. Your soul will go to Teus's. To strike Melie, without killing her, is also true; to stab her, who, to follow you, left that beautiful country where the deadliest poisons grow—where the serpents, by the light of the moon, twine themselves together in sport—where the traveller hears with terror the howl of the hyena—and where the bite of the red viper is followed by the agonies of death!"

Here the sorceress writhed her body, like one in frightful convulsions.

"Enough! enough!" cried the terrified corsair.

"You have raised your hand against your benefactor and your mistress; their blood is on your head! your days are numbered. Pen-Ouet!" cried she, with a deep voice.

At that sound, the idiot, who was apparently asleep, rose and went to his mother, who, taking hold of his hands, placed her brow against his, and said,

"Pen-Ouet, he asks how long Teus's will permit him to live? Answer, in the name of Teus's."

The idiot uttered a wild cry, appeared to reflect for a moment, then he struck the horse's skull on the ground thirteen times.

"Five, ten, thirteen!" said his mother. "You have thirteen days longer to live! Do you hear? And may Teus's drive your body, livid and cold, your eyes glazed, and the foam at your mouth, on our coast! Thirteen days, and your soul will be in the hands of Teus's!"

"But what of her? Tell me!" exclaimed Kernok, in agitation.

"Of it!" said the sorceress. "Why, you have only paid me for yourself. Well, I will be generous."

Then, placing her finger on her forehead, and reflecting for a moment, she said,

"She, too, will be cold, lifeless, her teeth clenched, and the foam at her mouth. Yes, you will be a beautiful pair! Please Teus's, I shall see you with a rock for your bed, the billows of the ocean for your curtains, the croak of the raven for your nuptial song, and the flaming eye of Teus's for your bridal torch!"

Kernok fell senseless on the floor, and the cabin resounded with shouts of laughter.

A knock was now heard at the door, and a sweet voice called out, "Kernok! my dear Kernok!"

These words produced a magical effect on the corsair; he opened his eyes, looked round him with fear and astonishment, and rising, said,

"Where am I? Is it a frightful dream? No, no; it is too true, accursed sorceress!"

"Kernok! my dear Kernok!" again said the soft voice.

"She here!" exclaimed the corsair, rushing to the door. "Come! let us leave this place!" said he, as he bore her rapidly away.

They proceeded along the coast, and soon gained the road leading to St. Pol.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EPERVIER.

The fog that hung over the neighbourhood of the little port of Pempoul gradually disappeared, and the sun's red disk was seen high above the horizon. At first, the little town of St. Pol, with its towering steeples, was indistinctly seen through

the mist that rose from the water; but it soon became more visible, when the pale rays of a November sun had dissipated the thick, damp air, of the morning.

On the right was the Isle of Kalot, to the left the mill and the church-steeple of Plougasnou; while, in the distance, appeared the coast of Tréguier, terminated by huge rocks, that reached as far as the eye could carry.

It was seldom that any other but small vessels were seen in the pretty bay of Pempoul. Therefore, the Epervier towered high above the ignoble crowd of luggers, sloops, and shallops by which it was surrounded.

The Epervier was certainly a fine-looking lugger. Who could help admiring the delicate rigging, the elegant sloping of its sails, the beautiful flag as it fluttered in the breeze, the studding sails, as graceful as the wings of a swan, and the brass cannon that bristled on each side?

But if you admire the Epervier as it lies at anchor, what would you say if you saw it flying after some unfortunate merchantman? Never did foaming courser bound so fleetly—never did swallow skim the water so swiftly, as the beautiful brigantine in a fresh breeze, her sails set, glided over the surface of the ocean!

The Epervier, as it lay slumbering at anchor, was certainly a beauty!

There were but few on board; only the boatswain, six seamen, and a cabin-boy. The boatswain, who was a man about fifty years old, was hastily pacing the deck; and the restless motion of the protuberance on his left cheek, denoted that he was biting his quid in no very amiable mood. The cabin-boy was standing watching this fatal prognostic with great anxiety; for the boatswain's quid was, to the crew, a sort of barometer, which indicated unerringly the variations of his temper; and, according to the boy's observations, there was, at this time, every appearance of squally weather.

"Thunder and lightning!" exclaimed the boatswain, "what can be keeping him? What wind has drifted him away? Where is he? Ten o'clock, and not yet on board! His fool of a wife, too, must needs set off in the middle of the night to seek him. To lose such a fine breeze as this! A thousand curses!"

The boy, impatient at the length of this soliloquy, had twice tried to interrupt it; but he was deterred each time by the ominous restlessness of the tobacco in the cheek of his superior. At length, after a great effort, he ventured to say,

"Breakfast is ready, Master Zeli."

"Ah! its you, Grain de Sel, is it? What brings you here, cursed monkey? Do you wish your hide tanned, eh? Answer. What are you wanting, imp of hell?"

At this torrent of abuse the boy assumed the gravity of a stoic. He was well accustomed to the freaks of his superior's temper.

Grain-de-Sel again uttered, though in an exceedingly submissive tone,

"Breakfast is——"

"Oh, the breakfast!" interrupted the boatswain, delighted at having found an object on which he could vent his fury. "Here, impudent dog!"

These words were accompanied by a box on the ear, and a kick that made the lad disappear through the hatchway, as if by enchantment.

On reaching the bottom of the hold, the poor lad, who had miraculously escaped breaking his neck, muttered, "Ah! the quid never deceives. No, no; I could easily see the humour that Master Zeli was in; yes, and I felt its effects too. Then," he added, after a few moment's silence, with an air of satisfaction, "It was lucky for me, however, that I fell on my feet; it's better than if I had fallen on my head, surely."

Having consoled himself with this philosophic reflection, he went to look after the breakfast of his superior.

CHAPTER V.

THE RETURN.

Although Zeli had partly vented his anger on Grain-de-Sel, he continued pacing the deck, and casting his eyes from time to time up to Heaven, while he muttered something, which it was impossible to mistake for a pious invocation. Suddenly he stopped, seized a spyglass that was close at hand, and, looking in the direction of the jetty, exclaimed,

"How fortunate! here he is, at last! Yes, it's he. What sweeps of the oar! Come along, my lads; make haste, and we may yet be in time to save the tide."

Master Zeli never thought of the difficulty of making himself heard out of gunshot reach, but continued encouraging, by voice and gesture, the sailors who were bringing Kernok and his fair companion on board.

As the boat neared the brig, the boatswain's whistle was heard, and a few moments afterwards Kernok leaped lightly on board the brigantine.

Zeli was surprised at the agitated and pale looks of his commander, who had returned bareheaded and without his dagger,

his clothes in the utmost disorder, and his whole appearance showing that something extraordinary had taken place. He therefore, instead of upbraiding his captain with the length of his absence, approached him with an air of respectful solicitude.

Kernok's keen eye searched every corner of the vessel to see if all was in order; then, looking at Zeli, he demanded, in an imperious tone,

"When will the tide serve?"

"At two o'clock, captain."

"If the breeze hold up, we'll be under weigh by that time. Order the flag to be hoisted, fire off the signal gun, weigh anchor; and when you're ready, let me know. Where's the lieutenant, and the rest of the crew?"

"Ashore, captain."

"Send a boat off in search of them. Whoever is not on board at two o'clock, shall have twenty lashes and eight days in irons. Lose no time."

Zeli had never seen Kernok in so stern a mood before; therefore, instead of, as he was wont to do, making a host of objections to his captain's orders, he promptly set about executing them.

Kernok, having attentively observed the direction of the wind, made a sign to his companion, who followed him to the cabin.

This was the person who had sought the corsair in the den of the sorceress, and whose soft voice had given utterance to the words "Kernok, my dear Kernok!"

Her features were exquisitely fine; she had large eyes veiled by long silken lashes, and beautiful auburn hair, that clustered beneath her bonnet; her form was slender and graceful, her step light and free, and the hue of her countenance seemed deepened by the rays of a tropical sun. Indeed, it was from that burning clime that Kernok had brought his companion, who was a beautiful young girl of colour.

Poor Melie! To follow her lover she had quitted Martinique and its plantations, her friends, and her home; and would have made any sacrifice for him, even to the little purse containing the heart of a dove and the teeth of a serpent—a potent charm!—that would protect her from injury as long as it remained in her possession.

Judge, then, if Melie loved her Kernok! And Kernok, in return, was passionately fond of Melie; for he had christened his favourite gun after her, and he never fired a bullet from it without thinking of his mistress. But the strongest proof of pirate's love was a deep scar on her neck, occasioned by a he had given her with a knife in a fit of jealousy. Now, violence of jealousy is the best test of the force of love, dent that the corsair must have been strongly attached

so Melie, and that her time must have flown sweetly by, in company with her mild lord.

On entering the cabin Kernok threw himself on a chair, and, as if to avoid some fatal vision, he concealed his face in his hands.

Melie approached him timidly, and, throwing herself on her knees, took hold of his hand, saying,

"Dear Kernok, what ails you? Your head is feverish!"

The corsair started, raised his head, and smiled; then, throwing his arms round her neck, he embraced her affectionately; but his lip happening to touch the fatal scar, he exclaimed,

"Perdition seize me! Where did that accursed sorceress learn——?"

He then approached the cabin-window; but, as if repulsed by an invisible power, he turned away in horror, then threw himself dejectedly on the bed-side. His red and fiery eyes, after remaining fixed for some time, gradually closed, as he yielded to the fatigue and agitation of the previous night. Melie, her cheeks wet with tears, gently lifted his head, placed it on her bosom, the soft heavings of which soon lulled him to sleep; then she parted the black hair that shaded the broad forehead of her lover, now kissing him, now passing her taper fingers through his bushy eyebrows, which were contracted even in his sleep.

"Captain," said Zeli, entering the cabin, "anchor is weighed."

Melie pointed to Kernok as he lay asleep, and signed to Zeli not to disturb him; but Zeli, faithful to the order he had received, repeated in a still louder tone,

"Captain, the anchor is weighed, and we wait your orders."

"What is it? who is that?" cried Kernok, disengaging himself from the arms of Melie.

"The anchor is weighed, captain."

"Fool! who gave that order?"

"Yourself, captain."

"I!"

"Yes, on coming on board about two hours ago."

Kernok looked at Melie, who inclined her head and smiled, as if confirming the assertion of Zeli.

"Yes, yes, I remember," he at length said, pressing his brow with his hand; it's all right. I shall be on deck presently. The wind hasn't fallen; has it?"

"No, captain; on the contrary, it blows fresher."

"Look sharp, then, and get everything ready," said Kernok, in a milder tone; and Zeli, perceiving that his captain's agitation had calmed down, could not refrain from putting in a *but*, *cap*——

"Are you going to begin with your *if's* and your *but's*? Take care, or I'll break your head with the trumpet!"

Zeli said no more, but secured his retreat as quickly as possible.

"Be calm, my dear Kernok," said Melie, timidly. "Do you feel better now?"

"Yes, yes; these two hours' sleep have chased away the foolish thoughts which that accursed sorceress put into my head. Come! the breeze is freshening; we must leave the port. There is no use in remaining here, when there are three-masters in the channel, galleys in the Bay of Biscay, and rich prizes in the Straits of Gibraltar!"

"How! Sail on a Friday?"

"Listen to what I am going to say, my sweet one! I ought to chastise you for teasing me to go and hear the ravings of a fool! I, however, pardon you; but let me have no more of such trash, or else——"

"Were her predictions, then, unfavourable?" interrupted Melie.

"I care nothing about her predictions. Only, I know this, that the first time I am at Pempoul I will pay the old hag a visit, which she will not readily forget. May the lightning blast me if I demolish not her cursed den, and leave her back of as many colours as the rainbow!"

"Don't talk thus of a woman with second sight; and oh! for mercy's sake, do not sail to-day! A black and white dolphin has been seen near the vessel, uttering piercing cries. That, you know, is an unlucky omen."

In saying this, Melie threw herself at the feet of Kernok, who listened to her patiently for a few minutes, but, growing tired of her importunities, he pushed her away with violence, seized his speaking-trumpet, and hurried on deck.

CHAPTER VI

SETTING SAIL.

When Kernok appeared, not a sound was heard, and for several minutes the most profound silence reigned.

At length, Zeli's whistle, long and loud, reached the ears of the crew; then the words, "Shall we unfurl our sails, captain?"

"Not yet; get all hands on deck."

The boatswain's whistle was again heard, and fifty-two men and five boys appeared, forming two lines, their heads upright, and their arms hanging by their sides.

These brave fellows did not exactly possess the candid and open air of young collegians. Oh, no! It was evident, from their weather-beaten faces, on which the passions had ploughed their deepest furrows, that the life led by these honest fellows was somewhat stormy and precarious.

Then, what a strange, cosmopolite crew! Nearly every nation in the world had its representative amongst them—France, Russia, England, Germany, Spain, Italy, America, Egypt, and even a representative of China, whom Kernok had decoyed on board at Manilla! Yet this crew, although heterogeneous, lived in perfect harmony together, owing to the rigorous discipline which their captain had established amongst them.

“Call the roll,” shouted Kernok.

The roll was called, and a man named Lescœt, a countryman of the captain’s, was missing.

“Mark him down, twenty lashes and eight days in irons,” said Kernok, who then mounted the quarter-deck and spoke in the following terms:—

“We set out once more, my lads. We have roosted here long enough. Our pockets are empty, but our powder-magazine is full; our cannons are as open in the mouth as ever, and are both willing and ready to speak. With this stiff nor-wester, we can pay a visit to the Straits of Gibraltar; and, if St. Nicholas aid us, by heavens! my lads, we will return with our pockets lined, to drink the wine of Pampoul, and dance with the pretty girls of St. Pol.”

“Hurrah! hurrah!” shouted the crew, in exultation.

“Hoist the mainsail!” shouted Kernok, in a stentorian voice, which order was scarcely given before it was accomplished.

After a few other orders, which were promptly given and speedily obeyed, the brigantine readily yielded to the impulse of the breeze—the large sails filling gradually, and the wind whistling among the cordage. Pampoul, and the coast of Treguier, receded from the view of the sailors, who gazed at the land as earnestly as if they were taking their last farewell of France.

“Larboard! larboard!” suddenly shouted Zeli, in terror.

“What is the matter?” demanded Kernok.

“It is Lescœt, who joins us in a boat, which we would have run over like a nut-shell, had I not sung out.”

Lescœt jumped on board, and approached the captain with a downcast look.

“Why so late?”

“My old mother was dying, and I stopped to the last moment to close her eyes.”

“Indeed!” said Kernok. Then, turning to the lieutenant, he added, “Square your account with this dutiful son.”

Lescoet was then led forward by Zeli, who said to him,

"You and I, my lad, have a bone to pick together."

"I understand you; how many?" said Lescoet, turning pale.

"Oh! you will not be stripped for a trifle, depend upon it; you can count them. I'll warrant that you will not be cheated."

"I'll have my revenge."

"Oh! that's always said at first; but, when it's over, it's no more thought of than yesterday's gale. Come, my lad, make haste; for I see the captain is getting impatient, and perhaps he might take it into his head to give me a taste of the same sauce."

Lescoet was stripped; and Zeli, receiving a signal from the captain, began his operation.

Up to the sixth lash he stood firm; but, at the seventh, his courage abandoned him: and well it might; for each stroke was vigorously dealt, leaving long, blue, red lines, and ultimately causing the blood to spurt in all directions.

M. Durand, the surgeon-carpenter, approached, felt the pulse of poor Lescoet, and, shrugging his shoulders, made a significant sign to Master Zeli, who willingly set to work again.

In giving the last lash, Zeli pronounced the word "twenty" with an air of satisfaction mixed with regret, like a young girl, when giving the last of her promised kisses to her lover; or, if you prefer the *simile*, like a banker counting his last pile of crowns.

"Now," said Kernok, "clap a good plaster of gunpowder and vinegar on his back, and there will be nothing seen of these scratches to-morrow." Then, turning to the lieutenant, he added, "Keep the head of the brigantine to the south-west, and if you fall in with a sail, come and tell me."

He then descended to the cabin to rejoin Melie.

CHAPTER VII.

CARLOS AND ANITA.

It was still mild and serene; for a three-masted vessel, called the *San-Pablo*, which was off the Straits of Gibraltar, had all her sails set to catch the breeze. She had come from Peru, was bound for Lisbon, and carried English colours, being ignorant of the war that had broken out between France and England.

Don Carlos Toscano, a rich merchant of Lima, had freighted the *San-Pablo* at Calao, and he and his wife occupied the cap-

tain's apartment, which was furnished with everything that could contribute to luxury, elegance, and splendour.

The air was calm, the sky clear, and the sea so smooth and unruffled, that, but for the slight motion of the vessel, one might have believed he was on land.

Carlos, seated on a rich sofa, was gazing on his wife, who was holding a guitar in her hand.

"Bravo! bravo! Anita," cried he; "never was the song of love sung more sweetly!"

"Because," replied she, "it was never felt more sincerely, my dear."

"It will last, too," said Carlos.

"For life!" said Anita, with fervour.

Their lips met, and Carlos pressed her fondly to his breast; the guitar fell at their feet, causing a melodious sound, like the dying note of an organ.

Carlos cast on his wife one of those passionate glances of love that thrill the soul with delight: and she, fascinated by his keen looks, fell gently at his feet, and rested her head against his knees; so that her beautiful face was nearly veiled by her long dark tresses, through which her eyes sparkled, like stars in the midst of a sombre sky.

"She is mine!" thought Carlos; "mine, mine for ever! For we will grow old together; wrinkles will furrow that soft face, and these dark locks will become silvery!" said he, pressing his fingers through her glossy hair. "On some beautiful evening, in autumn, surrounded by her grandchildren, she will expire, and her last words will be, 'I come to thee, my Carlos. Yes, for I shall die first; but, what happy days shall we pass together before that time! Young and strong, and rich and happy, with a pure conscience, we shall again see our own beautiful Andalusia, Cordova, and its Alhambra, with its richly sculptured porticos, and our lovely villa, with its orangeries and its marble fountains!'"

"And my father!" exclaimed the young girl—for Carlos had spoken the greater portion of his reverie aloud—"and the house where I was born, and the green lattice which I used to open so often when you were passing by; and the old church of San Juan, where, when I was at prayer, you first whispered in my ear, 'My dear Anita, I love thee!' The Virgin heard my prayer; for, at that moment, I was beseeching her to grant me thy love. We must return thanks to her at Notre Dame for having blessed our union."

"Oh, how happy and smiling is the future for us! How tranquil! How——"

She could not finish the sentence; a bullet came whizzing into the cabin, which fractured her skull, and cut the body of Carlos in two!

CHAPTER VIII

THE PRIZE.

"Bravo! admirably aimed! See, Master Zeli, the bullet entered below the taffrel, and found its way out of one of the port-holes on the starboard side. Bravo, Melie!" cried Kernok, patting the gun which bore that name, and which he had fired off at the San-Pablo, because she had not speedily hoisted her flag.

This was the bullet that killed Carlos and his wife.

"Ah! how lucky!" resumed Kernok, when he saw the English flag hoisted. "An Englishman! And the dog has the impudence to own it, without having a gun on board. Zeli, Zeli," cried he, in a voice of thunder, "get the oars shipped immediately, and we'll be alongside of her in half an hour. Lieutenant, send the men to their guns, and see that everything's got ready for boarding." Then, jumping on one of the guns, he added, "If I am not mistaken, my lads, that three-master is from the South Seas, and, from her build, is either Portuguese or Spanish, under English colours—ignorant, no doubt, that war has been declared between France and England. However, that's not our affair. That dog there ought to have piastres in its stomach; we shall soon see, my lads. Spread out thy wings, my brave Epervier, then thou shalt soon show thy talons." He then went below and locked the cabin-door on Melie, who was fast asleep.

The captain of the unfortunate San-Pablo, recognising the character of the brigantine, had hoisted the English flag, hoping to place himself under its protection; but when he observed the preparations that were going forward on board the Epervier, and saw that vessel rapidly gaining ground on him, all his hopes vanished. Flight was impossible; for the faint breeze, which they had had up to this time, was succeeded by a dead calm. Defence was also out of the question; for what could the two miserable guns of the San-Pablo do against the twenty that opened their frightful mouths on board the Epervier? The prudent Spaniard, therefore, hove to, and ordered his crew to fall on their knees and pray for the assistance of San-Pablo, who could not fail to manifest his power in their favour on so momentous an occasion.

The crew, following the example of the captain, fell on their knees, and commenced repeating their pater-nosters; but the Epervier still kept gaining on them.

The Virgin was then appealed to, but with no better success, for the terrible voice of Kernok rang in the ears of the Spaniards.

"Oh, oh!" said the corsair, "she has brought to, and has struck her flag. She's our's, my lads. Zeli, lower, and man the long-boat, and I'll go and have a chat with the captain."

Kernok then thrust a pair of pistols into his belt, seized a cutlass, and jumped into the boat.

"If this should be a trick of the three-master," cried he to the lieutenant—"if she make the slightest resistance, come to close quarters."

Ten minutes elapsed. Kernok jumped on board the *San-Pablo*, a pistol in each hand, and his sabre between his teeth. At the sight of the Spaniards, who were on their knees before a rude image of St. Pol, beating their breasts violently, the sabre fell from Kernok's mouth, and he burst into a fit of laughter. The Spanish captain, kissing a relic, was murmuring, "*San-Pablo, ora pro nobis!*" *San-Pablo*, alas! did not hear him.

"Come, come, finish your mummeries, old croaker, and show me the way to your nest!"

"Senor, *no entiendo!*" replied the unfortunate Spaniard, trembling.

"True, you don't understand French," said Kernok. "Well," he added—for the corsair knew just as much of every language as his profession required—"El dinero, compadre."—[Your money, comrade.]

The Spaniard again muttered, "*No entiendo;*" but Kernok, having exhausted his stock of Spanish, changed the dialogue into pantomime by presenting the muzzle of his pistol, which was instantly understood, for the poor fellow heaved a heavy sigh, and made a sign for the pirate to follow him.

To reach the locker, Kernok was obliged to pass through the cabin, on the floor of which lay the bleeding remains of Carlos and Anita.

The poor Spaniard turned his head away, and drew his hand across his eyes to wipe away a tear.

"Morbleu!" said Kernok, pushing the bodies with his feet, "this is the work of Melie; but it can't be helped. *El dinero*, comrade; *el dinero*—that's the stuff, my worthy fellow."

When Kernok was shown the hoards of money—about a hundred barrels, on each of which was written, "20,000 piastres!"—a strange feeling came over him.

"Is it possible?" cried he; and, in his joy, he embraced every one round him, captain, lieutenant, sailors, and powder-monkeys—even the remains of the once happy Anita.

Two hours afterwards the last barrel was transported on board the *Epervier*, and the crew of the *San-Pablo*, including the captain, were all made fast to the deck, in different parts of the vessel.

"Now, my lads," said Kernok, addressing his crew, "I shall

give you this evening a *noces et festin*; and, if you behave yourselves, something else that will astonish you."

"Oh, captain," replied Zeli, facetiously, "we'll be as prudent as young maidens."

CHAPTER IX.

THE ORGIE.

"Wine, wine, sacrebleu!"

Bottles are broken, decanters are smashed, and songs and oaths resound on every side. Now is heard the heavy fall of a drunken pirate, now the hiccupping of those who, holding their glasses in one hand, cling to the tables for support with the other.

"More wine, I say, cursed monkey; more wine, or I'll break your head!"

Some of them wrestle, foot to foot and front to front; they clasp each other, struggle; one falls—a bone is broken, and laughter and imprecations follow. Others, again, insensible, blood streaming from their temples, are lying at the feet of those who join in the loud bacchanal song; and some, in the last stage of drunkenness, amuse themselves by crushing between two balls the hands of their dead-drunk comrades.

The deck is red, either with blood or wine. What does it matter? Time flies on board the *Epervier*, for there folly and delight abound! Go on—enjoy life, for it is short; for who knows if you will see to-morrow? Amuse yourselves; seize pleasure, my brave fellows, whenever it is within your reach; for it may be your last opportunity.

Not that frail, modest pleasure, with wings of gold and azure, that resembles a mild and timid girl shaking her fair and beautiful locks before the mirrors of a boudoir—not that pleasure which demands a cup of ice-cooled liquor—nor that of the Sybarite, who asks only to be surrounded by flowers and perfumes, beauty and harmony, and exquisite and delicate wine. Oh no! It is that robust and athletic pleasure, with the eye of a satyr and the laugh of a demon—that which haunts taverns and gaming-houses, drinks till dead-drunk, writhes and tears, and deals blows of death; and then, bawling and swearing, rolls and groans amid the surrounding wreck and confusion.

It was night; and the tables, which had been placed on deck for the purpose of celebrating Kernok's lucky capture, were brilliantly lighted up by lanterns, which were suspended from the rigging.

The feast ended, amusement succeeded. The powder-monkey, Grain-de-Sel, daubed himself from head to foot with tar; and, to carry out the fun, rolled himself in a sack of feathers, from which he emerged like a wingless bird. Then, hopping and skipping about, encouraged by the applause of the crew, and stimulated by the lash of Master Zeli, his capers were antic and ludicrous. A German, perhaps the most mischievous fellow of the whole crew, to crown the merriment, approached Grain-de-Sel, holding a lighted torch behind his back, which he dexterously applied to a tuft of oakum, that gracefully balanced itself on Grain-de-Sel's brow. In an instant the feathery mantle was in a blaze, and the boy ran, amid the shouts and laughter of the crew, screaming frightfully.

One of them, however—a compassionate soul, no doubt, for there are such to be found everywhere—seized the boy and threw him overboard, saying, "I'll soon extinguish him."

Fortunately, Grain-de-Sel could swim like a fish, and being pleased with his bath, he prolonged it by swimming round the vessel; after which he clambered up to one of the port-holes, saying, with his accustomed stoicism, "That's better than being burnt alive."

Shortly after this, the sound of a pistol, followed by a shriek, proceeded from the cabin. Zeli rushed to see what it was, which proved to be nothing, or just the merest trifle in the world!

Kernok, being excited by grog, and boasting of his skill as a marksman, exclaimed,

"I'll wager you, my dear, that at the first fire I will strike the knife out of your hand."

Melie did not doubt her lover's skill; but not caring to test it, she eluded his proposition.

"Coward!" cried Kernok. "Well, to teach you better, I'll take your glass from you;" and, seizing a pistol, he fired it, and shattered the glass to pieces.

When Zeli entered, Kernok was still holding the pistol in his hand and laughing immoderately at the terror of Melie, who, pale and trembling, had taken refuge in a corner of the cabin.

"Well, Zeli, my old sea-wolf?" said Kernok, are your dames on deck, amusing themselves?"

"You may rely on that, captain; but they are anxious for your promised surprise."

"Ah, that's true!" said Kernok. He then whispered in the ear of Zeli, who opened his wide mouth, saying,

"What! you will——"

"Certainly; will that not be a surprise?"

"Oh, a famous one, and a droll one, to boot. I'll be off, then, captain."

Kernok then mounted on deck, accompanied by Melie. Both were greeted with loud shouts of joy.

A rocket ascended from the San-Pablo, and, after describing a curve in the air, it descended in a shower of sparks.

"Captain, do you see that rocket?" said the lieutenant.

"Yes, I understand it. Come, my lads, push the grog about; hand me a glass, and give one to my wife."

Melie was half-inclined to refuse, but how resist the attentions of her mild companion!

"Here's long life to the brave comrades of the captain of the *Epervier*," said Kernok, emptying his glass.

"Hurrah!" responded the crew, with a loud and sonorous shout.

The orgie was now at its height. The sailors, holding each other by the hand, were dancing wildly round the deck, and singing vociferously snatches of songs, remarkable for their intemperance and obscenity.

Zeli returned from the San-Pablo, bringing with him the ten men that Kernok had left in charge of the vessel. There now remained on board the Spanish frigate only the poor Spaniards, who were bound hand and foot on deck. A second rocket ascended from the San-Pablo.

"All's right," captain," said Zeli, "the match has caught—"

"All right," interrupted Kernok. Then, addressing the crew, he said,

"I promised you a surprise, my lads, if you behaved yourselves with propriety. Your prudence and moderation have far exceeded my expectations; such conduct shall not go unrewarded. You see that the Spanish vessel, rigged and fitted out as she is, is at least worth 30,000 piastres. Well, my lads, I'll give 40,000 for her out of my share of the prize-money, just to have the pleasure of treating my crew to the most splendid fireworks ever witnessed, accompanied by the most exquisite music. The signal is given; now take your places."

Those of the crew that were able clambered up the rigging, in order to have a full view of this spectacle.

When the second rocket had ascended from the San-Pablo, the fire began to display itself. This was the surprise that Kernok had promised. He had sent Zeli on board the Spanish vessel, to arrange combustible materials in her hold, and to see that her unfortunate crew, who were ignorant of what awaited them, were all secured.

The night was dark, the air calm, and the sea as smooth as glass. At first there arose from the San-Pablo a thick smoke, accompanied by myriads of sparks, which, when the unfortunate Spaniards discovered their doom, were followed by frightful shrieks, that rent the air.

"Do you hear that?" said Kernok. The music begins.

"Their pipes, captain, are devilishly out of tune," said Zeli.

The smoke heightening in colour, became a lively red. At

last it assumed the appearance of a long column of fire, which rose, and, curling in the air, cast upon the waters a long reflection of the colour of blood.

"Hurrah!" cried the crew of the brigantine.

The fire rapidly increased; the flames, ascending from the three hatchways at the same time, met, and spread out over the deck like an immense red curtain, above which appeared the dark rigging and masts of the San-Pablo.

The cries of the poor Spaniards, in the midst of this furnace, became so heart-rending, that the pirates set up a savage yell, to drown the voices of their unhappy victims.

The fire caught the rigging and cordage, and when at its height, two of the masts, no longer supported, fell on the deck with a fearful crash; the brilliancy of this immense body of flame was increased by the blackness of the night. The cries of the Spaniards were heard no more! Suddenly the flame burst out at the side of the San-Pablo, through a large hole it had made; the mainmast falling on the same side, caused her to lurch: the water rushed through the hole into the hold, and she gradually sunk, leaving for a moment her mizenmast blazing above the waters, like a funeral torch; then nothing was seen, save a light, reddish smoke; then night, and immensity!

"It is soon over!" said Kernok.

"Long live Captain Kernok, for giving his crew such a splendid treat!" cried Zeli.

This was answered by a loud hurrah! and the pirates, weary with fatigue, threw themselves on the deck. Kernok, too, went to enjoy a little repose in his cabin, with the secret satisfaction of an opulent man, who retires to his chamber after having given a sumptuous feast.

When Kernok was dropping to sleep, he murmured to himself, "They ought to be satisfied; a ship of three hundred tons, and three dozen Spaniards! I think I have behaved handsomely. They must not, however, expect it too often. It's all very well now and then; for, after all, a little amusement is necessary."

CHAPTER X.

THE CHASE.

Everybody was asleep on board the Epervier, save Melie, who, disturbed by vague apprehensions, was sitting on deck. It was still dark; but a pale streak of light on the horizon

announced the approach of twilight. Large and brilliant wreathes of gold soon illumined the sky, and the stars grew pale and vanished as the sun appeared, rising slowly out of the still blue waters of the ocean, which it seemed to cover with a veil of purple.

It was still calm, and the brigantine lay near the place where she had been the day before. Melie, her face concealed in her hands, was sitting musing on the quarter-deck. When she raised her head, day had already dawned, and she was enabled to see the objects that surrounded her, the sight of which caused her to shudder with horror and disgust. The sailors were lying here and there, in the midst of the disorder of the previous night's debauch. Everything was in a deplorable state of confusion. The deck was strewed with ropes, pots, broken glasses, and staved casks, from which wine and brandy were flowing abundantly. Here a sailor asleep, in his clenched hand the neck of a bottle; there a pirate, his head through the wheel of the rudder, so that, at the least movement, he would have had his head crushed to pieces.

Melie blessed Providence for having watched during the night with so much solicitude over the honest fellows that lay asleep on the deck of the brigantine; for, if a storm had arisen during the night, the Epervier, Kernok, his crew, and the piastres, would have all been lost! What a sad catastrophe that would have been! Melie knew this; and she felt, therefore, a desire to pray. Poor girl! her opportunities for raising her thoughts to her Maker were not of frequent occurrence on board the Epervier. She went on her knees and involuntarily turned her eyes towards that blue and vapoury line which girds the horizon, but she did not pray. Her look became fixed on a point which was at first scarcely distinguishable, but she soon discerned it more fully, and at length, shading her eyes with her hand to assist her sight, she stood for a moment in earnest contemplation; then her features assumed an expression of alarm, and she bounded away to the chamber of Kernok.

"How foolish you are, Melie," said the corsair, "going on deck with a heavy step. If you have waked me for nothing——"

"Here," interrupted Melie, handing a spy-glass to him with one hand, while she pointed with the other to the white speck she had descried on the horizon.

"By heavens, you're right!" said Kernok, looking attentively; then, hastily putting the glass to his eye, he looked for a moment, and exclaimed, "A thousand devils!" He now rubbed the glass, to assure himself he was not deceived by some optical delusion; but he was not deceived!

This discovery was followed by a round of the most frightful oaths that could be selected from a pirate's glossary.

When the corsair had fired off his volley of oaths, he seized

a hand-spike, and went round the vessel, now striking the deck and now some sailor as he lay asleep, accompanying each blow with a volley of oaths, almost enough to sink the brigantine. By the time he had completed his round, the men were all standing rubbing their eyes, their heads, and their backs; and, yawning frightfully, they asked one another what was the matter?

"The matter!" cried Kernok, in a voice of thunder. Why, you sleepy rascals, there is a sloop-of-war, an English cutter, coming down on us in full sail! and she has the advantage of the breeze over the Epervier, for the wind is freshening in that quarter, while we won't have it until that accursed Englishman overtakes us!"

Every eye was now turned in the direction in which Kernok was pointing.

"Eight, ten, fifteen port-holes!" cried he; "a cutter with thirty guns is not to be laughed at; besides, it belongs to the blue squadron, into the bargain! Here's no child's play. Zeli," he added, "get the oars shipped, and put everything in order as soon as possible, for the Epervier has neither a beak nor claws of sufficient strength to amuse herself with such a prey." Then, taking up a speaking-trumpet, he shouted,

"All hands at their posts; stretch every inch of canvass. Now, my lads, apply yourselves to your oars; if we can only catch a breath of air, the Epervier will have nothing to fear. Think of the piastres we have on board! then choose whether you'll go to the hulks, or return, with full pockets, to drink and dance with the girls of St. Pol."

The crew understood this address to the full extent, and saw the alternative was inevitable; therefore every exertion was used to increase the speed of the Epervier.

Kernok, however, did not deceive himself respecting the speed of his vessel. He too plainly foresaw that the English cutter, having the wind in her favour, had a great advantage over the Epervier; therefore, like a prudent captain, he ordered everything to be prepared for action, and attended to the execution of this order with surprising zeal and activity.

The cutter kept gaining on the Epervier. Kernok sent for Melie. "My dear," he said, "it will probably be too hot for you to stay here; you must go into the hold, and mind you don't stir; come, no tears; embrace me, and be sure you don't let me see you until the dance is over."

Melie turned pale, and looked like a statue of alabaster.

"Kernok, let me stay beside you!" said she, throwing her arms round the neck of the corsair, who felt his heart throb for a moment; then he pushed her away, saying,

"Come, leave me, I tell you!"

"Kernok, let me watch over your safety," said she, clinging to his knees.

"Zeli," cried the pirate, "rid me of this fool, and take her into the hold."

As the boatswain was about to place his rude hands upon her, she sprang to the side of Kernok. "At least," said she, her cheeks flushed, and her eyes sparkling, "take this talisman; it will protect your life during the combat; it was given to me by my grandmother; take it; believe me, its magic power is stronger than destiny."

"Take her away!" cried Kernok; "don't you hear me, Zeli?"

"If you should be killed, I will not survive you. There, my life is no longer protected," added Melie, throwing the talisman from her.

"She is a good, kind girl!" said Kernok, as he watched two of the sailors place her in a chair, to lower her into the hold.

The cutter was advancing nearer and nearer.

"Captain," said Zeli, "the Englishman is gaming on us."

"Do you think I can't perceive that, you old fool? Our oars are of no use, they only fatigue the men; unship them, load the guns, and let the grappling-irons be got ready; for we must have a turn with the cutter—for that is her determination. Take in the studding-sails, and lower the top-gallants; should the breeze freshen, we'll fight with our topsails set, for under these the Epervier always shows her talons to the best advantage."

These orders were instantly executed; and Kernok addressed his crew in the following manner:—"Now, my lads, here's a strong-ribbed cutter, so close to us, that we have no chance of escape; besides, we haven't a breath of wind. If we are taken we'll be sent to the hulks; and if we surrender, it will amount to the same thing; therefore, my lads, let us fight, like brave seamen. Perhaps, in facing her, we may, as the curate said, retire with our breeches. The Epervier beat a three master, after two hours' hard fighting, on the coast of Sicily; why should she be afraid of this cutter, with the blue flag? Remember the piastres, my lads!—the piastres, or the hulks!"

The effect of this peroration was decisive; the crew shouted simultaneously, "Hurrah! death to the English!"

The cutter had by this time approached so near, that her rigging was quite visible.

Suddenly a light smoke ascended from her, a flash, a loud report, then a bullet whizzed past the bowsprit of the Epervier.

"The cutter opens her mouth!" said Kernok; "she wishes to see our flag, the hussy!"

"What shall we hoist?" asked Zeli.

"This," said Kernok, turning over a sailor's old tarry frock with his foot; "we must be gallant."

"It's a rum 'un," said Zeli; and the old frock fluttered at the top of the halliards.

This pleasantry did not appear to be well received on board the cutter; for two bullets, almost at the same moment, cut their way through the rigging of the Epervier.

"Oh, oh! the lovely creature is getting rusty!" said Kernok. "Now, Melie!" continued he, as he pointed his favourite gun, "let's hear what you have to say to this English dame."

"Bravo!" cried he, when the smoke had cleared away, and he had seen the effect of his shot. "See, Zeli, her jib is already in ribbons; that looks well, my boy; but when the Epervier tickles her sides with her grappling-claws, you'll see how she'll laugh."

"Hurrah!" shouted the crew.

The cutter did not reply to the corsair's bullet, but quickly repairing the damage she had received, still bore down on the brigantine.

The two vessels were at length so near, that the pirates could hear the English officers giving their orders.

"Now, my lads," said Kernok, jumping on the quarter-deck, "to your guns; and mind you don't fire till I order you."

CHAPTER XL

THE COMBAT.

"Bullets, Master Durand!" "We've sprung a leak, Master Durand." "See, how my head bleeds, Master Durand!"

Thus the name of this worthy functionary, who filled the offices of gunner, surgeon, and carpenter of the brigantine, was heard from the deck to the hold, above the noise and tumult inseparable from so fierce a struggle as that which was now going on between the brigantine and the cutter. The Epervier creaked and trembled in every joint, as if the timbers were coming asunder.

"Bullets, Master Durand!" "The leak!" "My leg!" was repeated, amid bustle and confusion.

"Sacrebleu! wait an instant; I can't do everything at once; bullets to send above—a leak to stop below—one's head to look to here—another's broken leg there; I must begin with what is most urgent, and then I'll attend to you, grunTERS that you are; but what's the good of you now? you're as useless as a mast without sails!"

"Bullets! quick with the bullets, Master Durand!"

"Bullets! Why, if you play that tune a quarter of an hour

longer, we'll not have one left. Here, my lads, take care of these, for they are the last."

Durand then seized his calking utensils, and hurried away to stop the leak.

"What infernal pain I'm in," said Zeli, as he lay in the cockpit, with his right leg shattered, while the other had been shot entirely away.

Around him lay moaning the rest of the wounded, waiting until Master Durand could quit the mallet for the knife.

"Sacrebleu! how thirsty I am!" continued Zeli; "I feel weak, and I can hardly hear our guns speak. Are they getting hoarse?"

On the contrary, the firing was going on brisker than ever; it was Zeli's hearing that was growing weak at the approach of death.

"Oh, how thirsty I am," said he again, "and cold! I, that was so warm a few minutes ago!" Then, turning to a fellow-sufferer, he exclaimed, "What! is it you, my Polish friend? What's the matter? What makes you stretch yourself out in that manner? How ugly the rascal is? Look at his white eyes!"

The Pole was expiring in the last throes of agony.

"Durand, my old cock!" cried Zeli, "come along, now come, and look at my leg!"

"I'll be with you in a moment; another blow, and the damage will not be more discernible than the trace of an oar in the water. Now, then, it's your turn. Oh, you've caught it smartly!"

"Rather!" replied Zeli, endeavouring to smile, and quite proud at Durand's surprise.

"Why, where's your other leg?"

"Still on deck; but rid me of this one—it's troublesome to me—I feel as if there was a thirty-six pounder tied to my foot. Oh, how thirsty I am!"

In examining Zeli's leg, Durand shook his head three or four times, then gave a low whistle, and ended by saying, "It's all up with you, comrade."

"Nonsense! Are you sure of it?"

"Quite sure."

"Then, if you're a good fellow, you'll take my pistol and put me out of pain at once."

"I was just going to propose it to you."

"Thank you."

"Have you no commission to make?"

"No. Stay; here's my watch—you'll give it to Grain-de-Sel."

"Well, go on."

"Ah! I forgot. If the captain escapes peppering, tell him from me that he has commanded like a brave fellow."

"I'll not forget."

"You think, then, there's no chance for me?"

"On my honour! You may be sure I wouldn't jest in this matter with a friend."

"That's true; but it's provoking, for all that. How cold it is! I can scarcely speak; my tongue feels as heavy as a lump of lead; good-bye, comrade—your hand once more!—are you ready?"

"Yes."

"Mind, don't miss me. Fire!"

Zeli's earthly career terminated.

M. Durand would, perhaps, have liked to finish all his operations in the same style; but his other patients, frightened at the violence of the remedy which had succeeded so well with Master Zeli, preferred the plasters of oakum and grease which the sapient doctor applied indiscriminately to all his patients, with these consoling words to the dying, "What odds? when we die, there's an end of us; our next voyage would have been a rough one, with a cold winter; and wine not worth drinking;" and a host of other kind sayings, designed to soothe the last moments of the poor pirates, who had all the anxiety attendant on quitting an honourable existence, without exactly knowing the coast on which they were next to steer.

M. Durand was rudely interrupted in the discharge of his spiritual and temporal duties, by Grain-de-Sel falling, like a bomb, in the midst of his patients.

"Have you come here to molest me, scoundrel?" said the doctor, accompanying this demand with a blow that might have felled an ox.

"No, Master Durand; I've come for bullets; we've just fired off the last we had, and the English cutter still holds out; but we've given her a shaving. By-the-bye, I forgot I had lost a finger; look here, Master Durand."

"Do you think I'm going to lose my time in looking at your scratch, you rascal?"

"Thank you, Master Durand; it's better than being short of an arm. But look—here's another patient for you."

This was a wounded man, that they were lowering from the deck with a rope, which, not being properly fastened, slipped, and the poor fellow fell, and, groaning, expired.

"Another one speedily cured!" said Durand, whose mind was absorbed in striving to devise a remedy for the want of bullets.

"Bullets! bullets! I say," cried several voices, in accents of terror.

"Sacrebleu! we must have something to answer the cutter with, even if we should be obliged to charge our guns with cabin-boys!" said Durand, as he hastened on deck.

Grain-de-Sel followed him, without knowing whether the

intention the surgeon had expressed, of employing him as a projectile, was mere pleasantry or not; but, faithful to his system of consolation, he said, "I would like that better than going to the hulks."

CHAPTER XII.

THE COMBAT.

"Bullets! let's have bullets, or we'll go to the bottom like dogs!" cried Kernok, as soon as Durand appeared on deck.

"Not one left," said the doctor, grinding his teeth with rage.

"Hell and fury! Nothing to receive these English with, who are going to board us!" said Kernok, in fury, pushing Durand violently from him.

In fact, the cutter, although horribly mutilated, was, under a rag of her mizen, bearing down on the Epervier, which, not having a bit of canvass left, had consequently no means of avoiding her.

"Not a bullet! not a bullet! St. Nicholas, St. Barbe, and all the saints of the calendar, if you don't assist me," cried Kernok, dreadfully exasperated, "I swear that I will not leave one stone upon another of any of your chapels, on all the coast of Pampoul!"

It appeared that the saints, whom Kernok appealed to so energetically, were favourably disposed towards him; for no sooner had he uttered this strange invocation, than, struck with an idea, he shouted joyfully, "The piastres, my lads! the piastres! let us charge our guns with them. The English like money; they shall have it hot from the mouths of our cannons; quick with the piastres!"

This idea electrified the crew, and three barrels of silver were soon brought on deck.

"Hurrah! death to the English!" shouted the nineteen pirates, who were left in a fighting condition, and who were naked to their waists, in order that they might be more at liberty.

"The English dogs shall not say we are misers," cried one.

"We're fighting with a lady. Silver bullets! how gallant!" said another.

The guns were hardly charged, when the cutter made an attempt to run her bowsprit foul of the Epervier's rigging; but Kernok, by a skilful manœuvre, got to windward, and then drifted down on her.

The cutter, too, had exhausted all her ammunition, and had

also, during the two hours that this fierce combat had lasted, performed prodigies of valour.

One of the pirates fired his piece without orders.

"Dog!" cried Kernok, levelling him at his feet with a blow from an axe.

At this moment the two vessels touched each other. The English were standing, their boarding-axes in their hands, ready to jump into the brigantine.

All was silent on board the Epervier.

"Away! away!" cried the English captain, a fine young man, about five-and-twenty, who, having had both his legs shot off, had caused himself to be placed in a barrel of bran, to stop the bleeding, and that he might be enabled to command to the last moment.

"Away! away!" repeated he.

"Fire!" shouted Kernok.

The English sprang forward, and twelve of the Epervier's guns vomited a shower of piastres full in their faces.

"Hurrah!" cried the pirates.

When the smoke had cleared off, there was not an Englishman to be seen; some of them had fallen into the sea, others back on the deck of the cutter, and all were either killed or frightfully mutilated.

The cries of battle were followed by a gloomy and imposing silence. The eighteen pirates—the sole survivors—isolated in the middle of the ocean, and surrounded with dead bodies, could not look on each other without a feeling of terror.

Kernok himself fixed his eyes, in a sort of stupor, on the trunk of the English captain, which was now further disfigured by the loss of an arm; his fair hair was soaked in blood, and there was a smile on his lips; his last thought was, no doubt, of her who, when she heard of his glorious death, would clothe herself in robes of mourning.

"Happy young man! Perhaps he has also a mother to lament his loss—a mother who has fondled him on her knee when he was an infant! Perhaps a brilliant career has been thus frustrated—a glorious notoriety extinguished! What sorrowing there will be for him! How greatly indebted is he to the corsair!—a bullet has made a hero of him!—a hero whose loss will be mourned throughout the three kingdoms. What an ennobling invention is gunpowder!"

Such must have been the train of Kernok's reflections; for he was calm and cheerful in the midst of this horrid spectacle.

His sailors, on the contrary, regarded each other, for a considerable time, in stupid astonishment; but this feeling soon passed away, and their natural thoughtlessness and brutality resuming their sway, they all cried out with one voice, "Long live Captain Kernok and the Epervier!"

"Hurrah, my lads!" replied Kernok; "you see the Epervier has a hard beak; but we must now think of repairing our damages. According to my calculation, we must be somewhere on the coast of the Azores. The breeze is freshening, my lads; come, get the deck washed. As to the wounded," said he thoughtfully, "let them be taken on board the cutter, Master Durand."

"For——?" said the doctor, looking enquiringly.

"You shall know!" replied Kernok, with a sombre aspect.

Durand went to execute the captain's orders, murmuring to himself, "What is he going to do with them? This doesn't look well!"

"Come here, boy," said Kernok to Grain-de-Sel, who was wiping, with a sorrowful look, the watch that Zeli had bequeathed to him, which was covered with blood. When the boy raised his head, the tears were running down his cheeks; he advanced to the terrible captain without the slightest tear; one idea had entire possession of his mind—he was thinking of Zeli, to whom he was devotedly attached.

"Go below, and tell my wife that she may come and embrace me. Do you hear?" said Kernok.

"Yes, captain," replied Grain-de-Sel; and a large tear ran down his cheek, and fell on the watch. He then quickly disappeared by the main-hatchway in search of Melie, and a few minutes afterwards returned on deck; but Melie was not with him!

"Where is my wife, blockhead?"

"She is, captain——"

"She's what? Will you speak, you rascal?"

"She's in the hold, captain."

"I know that well enough, you scoundrel; why doesn't she come on deck?"

"Because she's dead, captain."

"Dead!" exclaimed Kernok, turning pale; while, for the first time in his life, a look of sorrow and anguish passed over his countenance.

"Yes, captain, killed by a bullet, that struck us below water-mark, and, what is curious, your wife's body has stopped up the hole, and prevented us from going to the bottom."

The boy, at the commencement of his narrative, had lowered his eyes, being unable to sustain the keen gaze of his captain; but, when he ventured to raise his head, Kernok had disappeared.

The corsair had rushed into the hold, and was standing, with dry eyes and clenched hands, gazing on Melie's body, which occupied the position described by Grain-de-Sel.

Poor Melie! her death was even useful to her lover!

Kernok stopped about two hours by the remains of his unfo

fortunate, during which time he completely assuaged his grief; for, when he again appeared on deck, his countenance was calm and placid.

"Why are we not allowed to stay in the brigantine, Master Durand?" demanded several of the wounded.

"I don't know, my lads; perhaps it's because the air is better here; you know that a change of air is reckoned beneficial to the sick."

"But, Master Durand, they are taking the cutter's masts and yards to the brigantine. How are we to sail?"

"Perhaps by steam," replied the doctor, who could not resist the pleasure of uttering a joke.

"What! are you going to leave us, Master Durand? and you, too, comrades?" said the poor fellows, as they saw the surgeon and a few of the crew jump into a boat to return to the brigantine.

"Yes," said a Parisian, who had lost an arm, and had a bullet lodged in his spine; "it's pretty certain that they've sent us here for a change of air."

"Why have they sent us here?" anxiously asked several voices of the Parisian.

"To perish! that they may have our share of the prize. If they had any good-nature in them, they'd make a hole in the bottom, and put us out of our misery at once, instead of leaving us here to devour one another, like a lot of sharks; for I've just heard that there are no provisions on board the cutter, which was partly the reason of her chasing us. It's vexing, however, to die so rich; for, with my share of the prize, I could have amused myself gloriously at Paris. Dieu! the *Ambigu*, *Vauxhall*, and the young girls! Ah! it's provoking! I shall be up the spout before you could fasten a jacket. My legs are already done for. Adieu, comrades! You'll have the worst of it. You are not tender, my brave lambs; and it'll require excellent sauce to render you gulpable."

Here his voice grew faint, and in five minutes after he was dead.

The Parisian had guessed rightly. It would be impossible to give the oaths and execrations that were showered on Kernok and his crew. Every one blasphemed in his own language, and the uproar was loud enough to wake a prebendary; but these unfortunate fellows were all too much disabled to render themselves any assistance. Some of them, viewing their fate in all its horror, ended their sufferings by crawling to the edge of the vessel and dropping overboard.

"Your orders are executed, captain," said Durand, on returning to the brigantine.

"We are once more fitted out," replied Kernok; "the breeze is freshening from the south; with this mizen for a mainsail,

and these top-gallants instead of top-sails, we can force our passage."

"Are we to leave these poor devils?" said Durand, pointing to the cutter.

"Yes," replied Kernok.

"It's not a very delicate proceeding."

"True. Do you know what provisions we have left, resulting from your revel, savages?"

"No."

"Well, we have just one barrel of biscuits, three casks of water, and one of rum; in three days, scoundrels, you got through the provisions destined for three months.

"It was your fault, as much as ours."

"It can't be helped now. We have about eight hundred leagues to go, and eighteen men to feed, who must be looked to first, for they are able to work."

"Then those on board the cutter must either set-to and eat one another, or die like dogs; for the poor devils will be hungry to-morrow."

"Let them! it's better it should be they, who are half dead already, than we, who have still some cable to run out."

The sailors, having heard this conversation, began to murmur.

"We won't," said they, "abandon our comrades."

Kernok fixed his eagle glance on them, and, taking up his battle-axe, said,

"You won't, won't you?"

All were silent.

"Do you know," continued he, "that we are eight hundred leagues from land, which will take at least fifteen days to reach; and that, if we were to keep the wounded on board, we would soon be without water?"

"That's true," replied the surgeon; "the wounded always drink like fishes."

"And," resumed the captain, "when we are without water and biscuits, do you imagine that St. Kernok would send us any? We would be obliged to eat each other's flesh, and drink each other's blood, as they'll have to do. How would you like that, lascars that you are? Whereas, if we try to reach the coast of Bordeaux, we may, like good citizens, pass the remainder of our lives in France, with our prize-money, which will not be any the less for having theirs joined to it."

This argument lulled all their scruples.

"In short," continued Kernok, "it must be so, because I have determined on it; do you understand that? and the first that opens his mouth to grumble again, I'll close it for him with the hilt of my dagger. So now get ready, and we'll run to the northward."

The eighteen pirates, of which the crew was now composed,

silently obeyed the captain, and cast a last look at their poor comrades, who rent the air with their cries when they saw the brigantine leave them.

After a long and stormy passage, the *Epervier* cast anchor, and moored in the bay of Pampoul.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TWO FRIENDS.

The Golden Anchor at Plonezoch is certainly an excellent auberge. In front of it there are two fine oak trees, that spread their branches over nicely-polished tables, which have always an inviting look; and, as the Golden Anchor is on the main road, it commands, on a fine morning in July, especially on a market-day, a full view of as stirring and as animated a scene as can well be imagined.

Two honest-looking fellows, admirers of this beautiful locality, were seated at one of the tables, chatting on a variety of subjects; and it appeared as if their conversation had lasted a considerable time, for they had a goodly number of empty bottles before them.

One of them was a man about sixty, short and stout, very ugly, with large whiskers, quite white, which contrasted strongly with his sun-burnt skin. He had on an immense and grotesquely-fashioned blue coat, large drill trowsers, and a scarlet waistcoat, with anchor-buttons on it, which was too short for him by five or six inches. An immense and well-starched shirt collar rose high above his ears, silver buckles sparkled on his shoes, and a glazed hat, sitting jauntily on one side of his head, gave him a careless appearance, rather at variance with his advanced age! It appeared, however, from the restraint visible in his manners, that he was in full costume on this occasion.

His friend was simply attired, and appeared to be a good deal younger. His dress consisted of a cloth jacket and trowsers, and a black cravat, negligently tied, so as to display a sinewy neck, which supported a sun-burnt, but joyous and open, countenance.

"It will be," said the younger, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and sighing heavily, "twenty years come St. Saturnin since our poor brigantine anchored for the last time in the bay of Pampoul, under the command of the late M. Kernok."

"How quickly the time passes!" replied his companion, tossing off a glass of brandy. "It appears as if it was only yesterday, doesn't it, Grain-de-Sel? When we are by ourselves, I

always call you Grain-de-Sel, because it reminds me of our happy days."

"Sacrebleu! don't put yourself under any restraint, Monsieur Durand; you are privileged; besides, you were a friend of poor Kernok," added he, with a sigh.

"It can't be helped, my boy; we must all slip our cables when the time comes, as I used to say to my patients, and——"

"Yes, yes, I know, Master Durand," interrupted Grain-de-Sel, afraid that the ex-gunner, carpenter, and surgeon of the brigantine was about to commence the recital of his tripple exploits; "but my heart almost breaks when I think, that only a year ago, we used to amuse ourselves at his farm, and smoke our pipes together."

"That's true, Grain-de-Sel. Dieu de Dieu! what a man he was! how beloved in the whole neighbourhood! If an unfortunate sailor applied to him, he was sure to be relieved immediately. In fact, during the whole twenty years that he lived there, everybody spoke of his charity. And how respectable he looked, with his long white hair and his brown coat! and wasn't he the picture of good temper, when he carried the old gunner's children on his back! There was only one thing I had to reproach him with—he was too fond of the clergy."

"Oh, that was because he was churchwarden, Master Durand. But that was only to kill time. When robed in his large gown on the *fête* days of the parish, did he not represent to life the tutelar saint, Jean-du-Doigt?"

"I liked to see him better on the quarter-deck, with his battle-axe in his hand," replied Durand, emptying his glass.

"And in the procession, Master Durand, with his wax taper, which, in spite of all the lessons he received, he always used to carry, as if it were a sword. But what vexed the curate most was his chewing during mass, and spitting among the people. How provoking it was that all his property should go to the government, because he didn't make a will! I was at St. Pol when the accident happened; but you, I believe, were present, Master Durand?"

"Yes, my boy, I was there. It was about eight o'clock in the morning when they came to tell me that there was a smell of fire proceeding from Kernok's chamber. None of them had courage to venture into the room, so I went in, and, oh heavens! let me have something to drink, for it unnerves me every time I think of it!"

After swallowing a glass of brandy, he continued: "Well, I entered, and saw the body of my old friend, covered from head to foot with a blue flame. I threw some water on him; it was no use. You seem to be astonished, Grain-de-Sel. I was not, however; for I had predicted this would come to pass."

"How, Master Durand!"

"Yes, I used to say to him, 'My old friend, immediate combustion is certain to put a period to your existence.'"

"But," said Grain-de-Sel, "are you not afraid of meeting the same fate?"

"Oh, it's different with me, my boy; I always dilute my brandy with a little Geneva. He, the old lascar, used to gulp his in its raw state. By-the-bye, Grain-de-Sel, I believe it's about time for us to go to the chapel to hear the mass, that we've paid, for the good of our poor old friend's soul."

Grain-de-Sel drew out a large silver watch, saying, "You are right. Do you remember that watch, M. Durand?"

"Do I know it? Ah! yes, poor Zeli gave it to me, the day that the Epervier fought the English cutter, saying, 'Give this to Grain-de-Sel. Adieu, my old friend; don't miss me.' Sacre-bleu! when I think of that now, it makes me more uneasy than it did then."

Grain-de-Sel paid the reckoning, and the two friends walked, arm-in-arm, to the chapel of St. Jean-du-Doigt.

CHAPTER XIV.

MASS FOR THE DEAD.

The clock of St. Jean's had just announced the hour at which the service for the soul of the late Nicholas Kernok was to commence; and the whole population of the district, by whom the worthy old man was almost adored, had quitted their employment, and were now waiting at the church-door to pay their last tribute of respect to the memory of their departed benefactor,

Grain-de-Sel and Master Durand arrived just as the church-door was opened, and were greeted by the crowd with great respect, to which they replied by a slight salutation. The sun was joyously darting his golden rays through the stained glass windows of the little church, and the light fell, chequered with a thousand hues, on the pew which Kernok, decked in his robes of office, used to occupy on solemn occasions. Alas! how calm and dignified was his demeanor! with what address he used to conceal his chewing propensity from the eyes of the curate! and how piously he used to close his eyes, as if in prayer, when the sermon made him a little drowsy!

M. Karadeuc, the officiating minister, now rose amid profound silence, and commenced his address:—

"My dear brethren, *apprehendi te ab extremis terræ et a longinquis ejus vocavi te; elegi te, et non abjeci te; ne timeas, quia ego tecum sum.*"

As the audience was composed of Bretons, not well versed in the classics, this exordium did not produce a great effect.

"This, my brethren, means, 'I have taken thee by the hand, to bring thee from the extremities of the earth. I have called thee from the most distant places; I have chosen thee, and I have not rejected thee; fear nothing, for I come to thee!' Now, my brethren, these words are applicable to the late worthy and virtuous M. Kernok, whose loss we all so deeply deplore."

Here M. Durand nudged Grain-de-Sel, who placed his finger by the side of his nose, and smiled.

"Alas! my brethren," resumed the curate, "M. Kernok was a lamb removed from the fold to distant climes, and Providence took him by the hand."

"What a lamb!" said Grain-de-Sel, with a stifled laugh.

The preacher continued—

"Providence, my brethren, also said to him, '*Elegi, non abjeci te.*' I have chosen thee, and have not rejected thee, although thy life had been one of agitation. Yes, my brethren, his life was agitated; but, after sailing on a stormy sea, the poop of his skiff reached a shore of peace and repose."

"Poop!" said Durand, disdainfully; "it's the prow, you mean, curate."

The preacher looked indignantly at Durand, and again said,

"Yes, the poop of his skiff reached, at last, a shore of peace and repose, where, under the fostering care of this worthy and virtuous man, the flowers of charity and religion sprang up and blossomed around him. Therefore, my brethren, join with me in thanking the King of kings for having bound the brow of him, whose loss we so much regret, with the garland of eternity."

"Amen!" responded the congregation.

"I say, Grain-de-Sel, picture to yourself Kernok's brow being bound with the garland of eternity!"

The curate descended, and proceeded, followed by all, to the cemetery, where the remains of Kernok reposed.

The countenance of Grain-de-Sel became sad and mournful. In his two hands he held his hat; while Durand, with one hand pressed the arm of his companion, and with the other wiped the tears from his eyes.

The curate muttered a prayer, which was repeated by the assistants on their bended knees. All then retired, save Durand and Grain-de-Sel, who, long after the sun had disappeared behind the mountains, were still seen, seated pensively by the corsair's tomb.

LE LION AMOUREUX;

OR,

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF A GENERAL LOVER.

LE LION AMOUREUX.

CHAPTER I

STERNY.

THE name of "*lion*," applied to numerous individuals in France, has now become so common, that it would be useless for us to enter into a long explanation to convince our readers that we do not mean the terrible king of the forest, or the obedient slave of Van Amburgh. This *race* at one time bore several epithets—those of "*muguet*," "*homme de bonne fortune*," "*dandy*," "*fashionable*"—but at the present period the most familiar one is that of "*lion*."

May we ask—why called *lions*? Is it because they are the kings of that portion of society termed the *beau monde*? Is it because, like the lion in the fable, they claim the four quarters of the prey which others have seized? I cannot tell; but I will endeavour to sketch the physiology of one, and then I will leave you to guess for yourselves.

The *lion* is in general a sprightly fellow, who has passed from the state of infancy to that of manhood. The desire to be thought young has for some years been abandoned; for among them youth is as much despised as old age; in fact, the *lion* has *never* been a young man, for there is nothing he despises more than the love-sick youth of eighteen. He is a lover of the fair sex, of wine, and gaming; but remember, that *liking* for woman is not to be called *love*, for this passion admits of no other, while the lion adds to the three mentioned—that is to say, when it is in his power—a strong passion for horses. They, unlike the lover, who is happy in

the esteem of her he loves, must attract the attention of all, and have their mistresses for the same end as they have their carriages—to make a display in the eyes of the world. The windows of the Café de Paris are always crowded with them, because this establishment is situated in the most public part of the capital. They have no great pretensions to be drunkards, still they have always the appearance of having emptied a number of bottles, which makes a material difference to the host.

The *lions* are, for the most part, ignorant of love, although they claim the privilege of speaking in the most familiar terms with all the pretty girls they meet—from the ballet-dancer of the opera to the *grisette*, who toils by day to render herself attractive by night. They have a foot in the higher circles of society, and a hand in the lower; are desperate enemies of the worthy mechanic, who, loving, cannot declare his passion, but sits in inward bliss, gazing on the object of his affection. The lion, on the contrary, without feeling the pains and pleasures of the soft, yet bitter passion, is not backward in declaring his love, and practises to his own account the language of the eyes, which, *he* says, speaks the true feelings of the heart.

But it is too much to bother us in this way with discussions. Tell us your story, inventor of news—out with it!—let the drama begin, and let the scenes pass before our eyes. You are fit for nothing else. If you do not amuse us, we will rail against you to-day; if you please us, the critics will be at you to-morrow. Alas! since it must be so, let us begin, in the name of all that is good; but I assure you I have lost both my courage and my confidence. So much watching, so much fatigue, and so many hours of study; so much of our heart, and so much of our health, in order to reach a mean corner in the temple of fame; and all this in misery, bearing the buffets of some, and the slanderous tongues of others. No one ever tells us to stop—that our labour has been great. No, no; the poor minstrel has not suag his last lay; he must string his instrument, and begin again.

A few days ago, about the hour of twelve, a *lion* of fashionable mien descended from his carriage, and entered the Café de Paris. His appearance, for two great reasons, excited much astonishment: the first, because he was superbly dressed; the second, because he asked for his breakfast like a man who was in a hurry, and who had some business of importance to transact. One of his companions looked searchingly at him—he did not, however, make use of his eye-glass—and said,

“Where the deuce are you going, Sterny?”

“To a wedding,” the young man replied.

“What fool’s going to get married?” the interrogator demanded

At this question a half dozen of heads were lifted up, looks were exchanged, eyes were raised to the ceiling, and each person asked himself the question—What fool is going to get married?

Sterny, on seeing this pantomime, speedily replied, with an indifferent air,

“Nobody, gentlemen—nobody; it’s a private affair.”

“And when shall you be disengaged?”

“I cannot tell you,” Sterny replied; “but I will make my escape as soon as the church ceremony is over; after which I shall no longer be required.”

“Must you then go?”

“Yes; I am *temoin du futur*?”

“*Temoin du futur*!” was repeated on all sides.

“Yes,” Sterny replied, seeing the astonishment that was depicted on all countenances; “yes, I am to be the *temoin* of a godson of my father. The old fellow has sent me a letter, stating that I must do him this pleasure, as the good young man, who is about to be married will be pleased, and consider it a very great honour. I have told you all, now,” Sterny added, in rising; “finish your breakfasts in peace. I shall be with you in the evening.”

As he was going out, one of his comrades cried—

“Where is your marriage to be held?”

“My faith!” Sterny replied, “you know as much as I do. I was to be at the bride’s, Rue St. Martin, at twelve o’clock; it is now a quarter past. *Adieu*.”

He left; and although this affair was of little or no importance, it was the subject of a somewhat long conversation.

“The old Marquis of Sterny,” said the son of a wealthy footman, who had a great respect for hereditary titles, “the old Marquis of Sterny still retains the habits of the ancient nobility, and the office that our friend has to perform is rather of a pleasing nature; but, in spite of his great name, he will not be able to appreciate it, and, instead of being good and affable to those poor people, rendering them happy and comfortable, he will appear before them with a haughty and derisive air; nevertheless——”

“Nevertheless,” said an *ex-beau* of eighty years—whose right to the title of lion had been often contested. He was elegantly dressed, very tall, and exceedingly ugly—a kind of wealthy *pedicure*, who called every woman he met his *petite*. “Nevertheless,” he said, “it may be very amusing; pretty women are to be found in the lower, as well as in the higher, ranks of life.”

“Pretty!” cried a veritable *lion*, who was a strong supporter of the fine arts; “yes, but they are tradespeople.”

“Ah! gentlemen,” replied the son of the valet, “the ancient nobility used to hold the working classes in great esteem.”

"Parbleu!" replied the *lion artiste*, "the working classes in former times! Ah, that is easily conceived; young girls, who knew nothing; women, who knew little more, engrossed in the pious duties of the family, for whom the pleasures of the world, the arts, and literature, were far beyond their reach; who looked upon a young man of the court as a serpent of the book of Genesis: to penetrate into this life, to throw into disorder, to play with the ignorant, to astonish them, as we do children, when we relate to them tales of fairies, might have been very amusing—and I can easily account for the passion of the *Maréchal de Richelieu* for *Madame Micherlin*. But how different the working people of to-day! the most part of them gifted with a sort of education which they make use of with incredible impertinence, determined not to be astonished at anything; virtuosi and prodigies, who play the sonatas of *Steibelt*, and who, contemning *Rossini* and *Meyerbeer*, decide in favour of the *Postillon de Lonjumeau*; bluestockings, who read *Madame Sand* as a study, but who devour *Paul de Kock* with delight; artists, who get their portraits taken by *M. Dubuffe*; women, in fact, who give their opinions upon the regulation of taxes, and on the immortality of the soul. It is truly heart-sickening, and I can easily comprehend the *ennui* of *Sterny*; the women will be looking at him as they would at a wild beast, and God knows whether they will not measure him with the yard-stick of some short-legged counter-skipper, who has composed twelve verses in honour of the marriage—who will carve at table—who will sing during the dessert—who will dance all the night—and who will be proclaimed the most amiable man of the company."

Thereupon the *lion* lighted his cigar, sat down upon a chair, drew another near him, placed it betwixt his legs, and began to look down on the people who were passing. The other *lions* betook themselves to occupations of a similar nature, and the conversation ceased about *Léonce Sterny*.

CHAPTER II.

LISE.

Young *Sterny* arrived at la Rue St. Martin. He had no appointment that day, no hunting excursion, no woods to explore, and therefore thought nothing about what pleasure he might have had, but entered the house of *M. Laloine*, feather-dealer, thinking only of performing the commission of his father. They were waiting for him when he arrived. He was introduced to the bridegroom and bride, who had not the courage to

look at a marquis, then to the parents; and he saw that the young people were all embarrassed when he spoke to or saluted them. He looked round the room, endeavouring to find some one with whom he could enter into conversation; but, seeing none to his desire, he retired to a corner of the room. Whilst they were busy preparing for their departure, a young girl entered, crying—

"I told you I would have my gown changed, before your great marquis arrived."

"Lise!" M. Laloine said, reproachfully, while the rest of the company remained stupified. The glance that M. Laloine directed towards Sterný, showed his young daughter the indiscretion of her conduct, and she coloured up to the eyes; such a blush our *lion* had never before witnessed.

"Pardon, father!" she said; "I was not aware that he was here."

M. Laloine then approached Sterný, and said, in a parental tone—

"You must excuse her, sir; she is only a child of sixteen, who does not yet know how to behave herself."

Sterný gazed upon that child, for she was beautiful as an angel, and muttered in astonishment—

"Is she, also, your daughter?"

"Yes, Monsieur le Marquis."

"Ah, well," Sterný said, "have the kindness to introduce me to her, that I may make my excuse for being so late."

"Ah, it is not worth the trouble," M. Laloine replied; "you must not heed that young slut."

But Sterný was not of that opinion;—he had never seen any one so lovely.

At last they set out for the mayor's; Sterný went into the coach with the bride, her mother, and a male relative. Fortunately, the distance was not great, for these four found themselves very much embarrassed. The relative, to begin the conversation, said,

"What do you think, sir, of the sugar question?"

Sterný had never given it a thought. He replied coldly,

"Sir, I am in favour of the planters."

"I understand," his interrogator said bitterly, "the progress of national industry frightens you; but the French government will ruin everything."

So this worthy continued speaking till they reached the mayor's, without giving any other person an opportunity of putting in a word. Sterný thought no longer of the beautiful Lise, and was beginning to find his task a disagreeable one. As he was alighting from his carriage, he perceived the young girl springing from the coach which she had come in, her face glowing with delight. An incident here took place which, per-

haps, gave rise to this little history: Lise took the arm of a tall, raw-boned young man, who had the honour of being bridesman, and on being called from behind to go and arrange a flower in a young girl's head-dress, which had come in contact with the top of the carriage, she left the *gros garçon*, who, waiting her return, remained motionless, holding his arm like a hoop, ready to receive the beautiful *bras* of the young Lise: no sooner had she performed her office, than some one at the head of the *cortège* called upon the youthful clown. Sternny was then left by the side of Lise, who, on giving a finishing touch to the *coiffure* of her friend, took hold of the first arm she met, which was that of the marquis, saying,

"Come, let us make haste."

On seeing the countenance of Sternny, Lise gave a faint scream, and tried to withdraw her arm; but he prevented her, saying smilingly,

"Since chance has given me your arm, I hope you will allow me to retain it."

"Excuse me, sir," Lise replied, "I am bridesmaid—I cannot; M. Tirlot would be angry."

"What! is that M. Tirlot?"

"Yes," Lise replied; "he is the *garçon d'honneur*, and therefore claims the privilege——"

"It is a privilege which I intend disputing by sword or pistol," the young *lion* said, in a significant manner.

Lise looked at him in astonishment, and replied in agitation,

"If it must be so, sir—come; I will tell him that such was my desire."

From the manner in which Lise pronounced these words, Sternny perceived that she had taken what he had said in earnest, and that she was persuaded that the marquis would kill the bridesman if he dared make any objection. Sternny and Lise were the last in the procession; and as soon as they entered the magisterial hall, the young girl said,

"M. Tirlot left me upon the road, and if it had not been for M. le Marquis, to whom I am much obliged for his politeness, I should have been forced to come by myself."

As the mayor had not yet arrived, Sternny sat down by the side of Lise. He scarcely knew what to say, and his presence evidently much embarrassed her.

"Such a day as this," Sternny said, "causes the hearts of young people to beat."

Lise remained silent.

"It is a remarkable day this."

Still the same silence.

"And such a day will soon happen to yourself, Lise."

"Ah!" she said, "it is very tiresome that the mayor should cause us to wait so long."

Sterny saw that his advances met with very little success. He sat for some minutes admiring with pleasure the marvellous regularity of her features, the gracefulness of her white neck, which was neither too long nor too short; and then he felt, for the first time in his life, a pleasure sweeter far than ever he had derived from the society of the dames of fortune. He, however, was not discouraged, and profiting by the words of Lise, he said in a caressing manner,

"You speak very lightly of so worthy a magistrate! you must know that it is he who in reality is to marry your sister. The ceremony at the church is only a form."

At these words Lise raised her eyes and fixed them upon him in astonishment, drew back a little, then looked downwards, and said,

"I know, sir, that there are men who think so; but I will never be the wife of any one who will not engage himself to me in the presence of his Maker."

"Ah!" Sterny thought to himself, "the *petite* is pious; but she is handsome; therefore I must have another trial."

"But this oath," he said, "will not be of much service to you, for your husband is sure not to do all that you require of him."

"I expect he will," Lise said, drily.

"Ah!" Sterny said, smiling, "you are truly despotic."

"Oh, quite so," she replied, with her former carelessness.

"But are you aware that it is very wrong?" Sterny said, with a serious expression.

"What is that you say?" she replied, laughing in his face; "you are, at all events, not the person that will have to suffer."

"That will not prevent me from pitying the man that you will some day tyrannize over."

"But I am sure he will not complain; that will satisfy me."

"Has he told you so?" Sterny enquired.

"No; but I am sure of it," Lise said.

"He loves you, then?"

"Who?" Lise enquired, in astonishment.

"Why," Sterny replied, "your future husband—the slave who will be so happy in his chains."

"Do I know him?"

"You said that you were sure——"

"Ah!" Lise said, "I am sure that I shall love him; I am sure that he will be an honest man; and as I shall be a virtuous woman, I hope he will be happy."

This was said with so much sincerity and truth, that Sterny believed in the faith of the young girl, and said, with conviction,

"You are right; he will be so."

"Ah!" Lise said, rising, "here's the magistrate."

The mayor entered, and the ceremony began; oaths were taken on both sides, and all went into the private office to sign their names. When it was Sterný's turn, he did exactly as the others; but on handing the pen to the next person, he was surprised to see Lise toss her head with an air of displeasure. Was it because he had signed the "Marquis of Sterný?" But the omission of his title would not have been very agreeable to Prosper Gobillon, who was desirous of having such a distinguished witness. Had he signed before his turn, or taken more space than was necessary? Sterný, who prided himself on *etiquette*, was at a loss to ascertain what had given rise to the young girl's displeasure, and wished to know in what respect he had offended her. He remained standing for some time in the office, his eyes fixed on Lise, then on the persons that signed after him, who seemed to do exactly as he had done, without giving offence. It was then her turn; and on the clerk handing her a pen, she said, in a tone of mockery,

"Stop, if you please, till I take off my glove."

And when it was off, she signed, with a hand, perhaps the whitest and smallest that Sterný had ever seen. He then perceived his error, and said to himself,

"The little thing has her points of delicacy. What does a glove more or a glove less signify to the sanctity of an oath, or to the signing of a contract? Nothing, surely; yet it seems that the naked hand uplifted to heaven evinces greater sincerity of heart."

Sterný was lost in reflection, until they were preparing to leave. M. Tirlot, bridesman, and consequently master of the ceremonies, went to tell the coachman to draw up, while Sterný offered his arm to Lise, which she immediately took, without observing that she had forgotten to put on her glove. The young marquis walked by her side, his head inclined, and his eyes fixed upon the little white hand which was resting so softly upon his arm. He had never seen such a hand; it was so beautifully made, and her fingers were so exquisitely tapered. His eyes at length fell upon a medallion, upon which was a small gold plate, with an inscription that he in vain endeavoured to decipher.

While so occupied, Lise, seemingly content with her own thoughts, began to agitate her admired fingers, and ultimately finished by beating a gallop upon the arm of her companion. At this moment Sterný looked at Lise, who, on perceiving his intention, gazed at him, her countenance full of mockery.

"It appears that Mademoiselle is a musician," Sterný said.

"Why, sir?"

"Because," Sterný replied, "you have been playing a most beautiful gallop upon my arm."

Lise blushed, was confused, and withdrew her arm, saying, in a half-audible voice—

“Oh pardon, sir! I have forgotten to put on my glove.”

“Just as I forgot to take it off,” Sterný replied; “you see that every one is liable to mistakes.”

Lise did not reply. The steps of a carriage were lowered before her; she mounted them so hurriedly, that Sterný got a glimpse of her foot, so straight, so little, surmounted by an ankle the most delicately-formed imaginable! He was about to place himself beside her, but seeing the mother, he turned round and said to the coachman,

“Shut the door, and follow the other carriages.”

No sooner was Sterný seated in the carriage with Madame Laloiné, than she said,

“What have you done with Lise?”

“I saw her into a carriage,” Sterný replied.

“With whom?” demanded the prudent mother.

“By herself, Madame.”

“How! alone!” Madame Laloiné exclaimed, in astonishment.

“Yes, Madame, she unthinkingly made a mistake, and went into my carriage.”

“Ah!” Madame Laloiné said, “I don’t know what’s the matter with her; ever since the morning she has been as giddy-headed as any one could be.”

“It is my cabriolet,” the young marquis added modestly “and there are only two seats. I dared not——”

Madame Laloiné thanked Sterný for his kindness, and after a few moments’ silence, said,

“I think she will be wearied by this time.”

Sterný thought within himself that she would not be so lonely as her mother imagined.

In fact, Lise was at first astonished to find herself alone, but was not sorry, as the words and looks of Sterný had embarrassed her. She thought of all that had happened—her naked arm—of the observations he had made—of her imprudence in going into the carriage of a marquis; and, as if in answer, she tossed her pretty head, saying—

“Bah! and what is it to me?”

Having said so, she began to examine the rich silk that ornamented the carriage; she sat on one side, then on the other, to enjoy the soft flexibility of the cushions; she lifted up one of the windows, to find out the thickness of the glass; then smiling at the idea of her own ease and comfort, it struck her that the carriages of the great ladies that she had seen in the Champs Elysées were similarly made; and without thinking, as many young people would have done, that she might some day have one of her own, she began to imitate the *nonchalance* with which those dames seat themselves in the

corner of their equipages, and who look with an air of superiority on the passers by. Pressing with her white shoulders and fresh cheek the soft silk, which seemed, from its elasticity to caress her, and pretending that she perceived some of her friends, she bit her under-lip in the midst of a smile, moved her hand slightly in one direction, and graciously inclined her head in another. She then thought that if the handsome marquis were on horseback by her side, how graceful her salutation would be! The heedless girl then inclining her head, smiled, and in so doing opened a pair of ruddy lips, which disclosed a set of teeth that ivory could not excel in whiteness, nor the dentist by artifice in regularity. Her surprise may be guessed when, on raising her head, she perceived Sterný, standing at the door of the carriage, offering her his hand to help her to alight. She started, and blushed at the idea of being caught in such a ridiculous position. On descending, Sterný demanded laughingly—

“Who were you saluting with so pleasant a look, and with so sweet a smile.”

She hid her face in shame, and appeared agitated. When she entered the church, Sterný plainly saw that she paid little attention to the ceremony that was going on. Lise neither gave a side glance at the countenance of the husband nor at the peculiarly embarrassed deportment of the fair spouse; nor did she watch with curiosity to see if the ring passed the second joint, which indicates submission. She was praying; her young heart was struck with remorse, and she was fervently asking God to pardon her the fault which she had committed. Heaven heard the prayer of the poor girl; for at last she rose with a face evincing both fortitude and happiness. Sterný looked at her in surprise, as she approached him, saying, in a changed tone from that in which she had previously spoken to him,

“This wedding must be very tiresome to you, sir?”

“Tiresome!” Sterný replied; “why should it be so?”

“Because it is neither in accordance with your habits nor your pleasures; but it is now nearly over.”

Till then, Sterný, in spite of the solicitations of Prosper Gobillon and M. Laloine, had determined on leaving as soon as he had signed his name at the church, but what Lise said had in it the same purport as bidding him farewell. Having no relish for taking his leave in that manner, he replied,

“I assure you, Mademoiselle, that it is not at all tiresome to me; but if my presence is so to you, you must scold your brother-in-law. It was for *him* that I came.”

Lise did not reply, but hid herself among her young companions, and Sterný went forward to sign his name.

“Look, look!” said a young girl, touching Lise on the shoulder; “he has taken off his glove this time.”

Sterný, who heard the exclamation, lifted his head, and his eyes met those of Lise. The young girl felt, as by instinct, that there was something betwixt her and the marquis which ought not to be; and so much did this thought afflict her, that, when it was her turn to sign, her eyes were full of tears, and her hand trembled. On her mother, who was by her side, asking what was the matter, she replied,

"Oh, nothing! it was just an idea that crossed my mind." Then, profiting by her mother's alarm, she took hold of her arm, saying, with the greatest simplicity,

"I must go home, mother, in the same carriage with you."

"Yes, you shall, my poor Lise," the good lady said, embracing her.

Léon, at this moment, struck with the beautiful expression of the young girl's countenance, said to himself,

"Ah! I shall go to the dinner, and nothing shall prevent me from dancing with that beautiful creature in the evening."

Lise looked at the *beau* marquis with attention, and her bosom heaved as he got into his carriage, which soon afterwards rolled rapidly away from her.

CHAPTER III.

THE MEDAL.

Seated in the coach beside her mother, she, for the first time since the morning, found herself at ease, and began to speak of the beautiful *toilette* that she had prepared for the ball. In the midst of the conversation, on putting her hand to her neck, she cried,

"Oh, mamma! I have lost my medal. Oh dear! oh dear! yes, I had it, I am sure."

"Perhaps," her mother said, "you dropped it at the mayor's, perhaps in the church, perhaps in the carriage."

"Ah!" Lise exclaimed, "I hope it was not in that of the marquis."

"Why?" the mother said, "he will find it and bring it to us."

"Is he coming again?"

"He promised he would," the mother replied.

Lise ceased speaking, and became pensive; she thought no longer of her handsome gown, her pretty shoes, and her kid gloves; nor did she think of her beauty, nor of the effect that her appearance would produce in the ball-room; but she was of that age and of that character when sad thoughts are of short duration, for she had scarcely reached home before she threw aside her vague fears, crying,

"Ah! but no; I must be happy to-day."

And without further reflection she determined on amusing herself at the expense of the handsome marquis, for he was only a young man, like those who were around her.

As for Sterný, as soon as he was alone, his resolution of returning began to shake. Notwithstanding the good opinion that he had of himself, he thought that there was very little chance of making a conquest of the charming Lise, for to-day could not, for him, bring a to-morrow. What excuse could he find, after the nuptials, to secure a reception at the feather merchant's; and if he were shown to the door, what a strange predicament would he be placed in! Decidedly this enterprise was truly ridiculous, and it would be much better for him to write a note, begging to be excused, and to dine at the Café de Paris, instead of going to the Cadran Bleu, where the nuptial feast was to be held.

While Sterný reasoned thus, the image of Lise was ever before his eyes; and it was so beautiful, so graceful, so full of charms! Who could describe the sweet thoughts that flashed across the mind of the *lion*, as he reflected on that rare beauty? To excite her love for him, to take her from her family, to fight with one of her brothers, to be subjected to a law-suit, to be publicly spoken of in the newspapers, to be condemned for seduction by the courts and pardoned by the people, to whom the marvellous beauty of the girl would plead a sufficient excuse for the committal of the crime, to gain in this conquest a renown which would vex and shame his companions—this appeared to him very tempting; but as soon as he had measured the obstacles and counted the difficulties, he banished the idea, not for its immorality, but because he deemed its realisation impossible. At length he came to the resolution of remaining at home, and of abandoning the project, when he perceived, upon the opposite cushion, a gold medal, attached to a chain of plaited hair. He took it up, recognized it as the one that Lise had worn round her neck, and read the following inscription:—

"Ce qu'on veut on le peut."

"*Pardieu!*" the lion said to himself, "if this motto be true, I must succeed."

In a state of indecision he reached his own house, where he found five of his friends warmly discussing the impropriety of allowing government horses to compete in the races of the Champ-de-Mars.

The arrival of Sterný put an end to the discussion. On his appearing, the tall dandy, Lingart, of whom we have previously spoken, cried, in burying his chin in his cravat,

"Ah! ah! M. Aymar."

"Eh bien!" Aymar de Rabut, the *lion artiste* said, "I have lost."

"How, in the devil's name!" cried Mariné, the son of the footman, "do you make wagers with that tall stock-jobber? You are well aware of his instinct for making profitable bargains and wagers, and that if he is concerned in what appears a bad speculation, he is sure to come off the winner."

"Yes, it is true I am somewhat lucky," Lingart said, screwing his mustachios in seeming contentment.

"What is all this about?" Sterné demanded.

"Only," Lingart said, "that we dine at the Rocher de Cancale, and that the dinner is to be at the expense of Aymar de Rabut."

"You have laid a wager then?" Sterné said, pricking up his ears like a war-horse on hearing the sound of a trumpet.

"Yes," Aymar de Rabut replied; "I do not know how it was, but for more than an hour I maintained that the marriage would be tiresome to you, that you would be disgusted with men, women, and children; and it turns out that it was I who wagered that you would allow yourself to be entangled by them, and that you would remain both to the dinner and ball. Lingart wagered that you would not stop, and that we should have you with us to-night."

"But I tell you," Mariné cried, "that if you were going to sue Lingart for 100 louis, and he did not wish to pay them, he would prove to you, as clearly as two and two make four, that you owe him ten thousand francs."

"Ah, bah!" Lingart exclaimed, "do you think it is so very clear that two and two make four?"

At this remark they all looked at each other, as if Lingart had been guilty of a piece of foolery; but he added, with an arrogance that surprised all parties,

"Well, have the kindness to prove to me that two and two do make four."

"This savours of buffoonery," Mariné replied.

"Well," Lingart said, "if it be buffoonery, I will wager twenty-five louis that none of you can prove to me that two and two make four."

"*Pardieu!*" said Aymar de Rabut, "it does not require proving; that is, because——"

He stopped; and Lingart replied, with a triumphant air,

"Well! why is it?"

He waited for an answer; and on not receiving one, said haughtily,

"Go and order our dinner, and——"

"And," Sterné said, interrupting him, "let it be a splendid one; for it is Lingart who pays."

"How do you make that out?" said the speculator.

"Because Aymar has won. I return to dinner, and I intend stopping to the ball."

"You do so to make me lose," Lingart said.

At these words Sterný reflected, and said,

"I annul the wager."

"Why so?" demanded Lingart.

"Because when I entered," Sterný replied, "I had not decided; nor do I know whether I should yet have done so, if you had not spoken of the wager."

"And what has made you decide so suddenly?"

"Nothing," Sterný replied; "only I cannot do otherwise."

"Why so?" Lingart demanded.

"Ah!" Sterný replied, laughingly, "this is as difficult to explain, as it is to prove that two and two make four."

"Nevertheless, you at first doubted it."

"You are becoming tiresome, Lingart," Sterný said, "with your discussions."

"He is practising for the Chamber of Deputies," Marinét said, with a smile.

Lingart, who had given 30,000 francs for three votes in the last election, bit his lips, shrugged his shoulders, and allowed the conversation to turn upon something else. At last a *débutante* of the opera became the theme of conversation. Aymar spoke of the beautiful form of her foot, the graceful turn of her shoulders; while Marinét applauded the fine expression of her face, and the brightness of her eye. Sterný had seen her the previous evening, had admired her beauty as well as her performance; but now that he drew a comparison between her and Lise, he saw nothing pretty in the former, while the latter filled him with delight. What would his companions say on seeing this paragon of perfection? what would be their exclamations on seeing one so perfect in form, so naturally graceful? The feather merchant's daughter became every instant more beautiful in the eyes of Sterný, and, by a strange freak of his mind, he began to repent of the idea he had formed of seducing her. Six o'clock struck; Sterný rose, bade his companions good night, and hurried to the Cadran Bleu.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DINNER.

Love is a strange passion—sudden—irresistible—which strikes the heart at the sight of an unknown being—a strong passion, which penetrates the soul with imperceptible progression—a feeling which absorbs all others, which changes the dim eye to a bright one, the uncouth voice to the softest

notes of music—which, in fact, blinds the enamoured party; for he can see no imperfections.

When Sterný entered, no one had arrived but the new married couple and M. Laloine, who were superintending the arrangements for the festival. Prosper wished M. Laloine to remain with the marquis, but Sterný desired them not to stand on ceremony, but to pursue their affairs as if he was not present. Perhaps you may ask—Is it actually Léonce Sterný, a lion who knows well the advantages of arriving late, that comes before his hour, and sits down to table like a shopkeeper or a literary man, when invited to the houses of the rich? Indeed it is really Léonce Sterný, one of the most furious of his band. But, do you know what he did in the host's absence? He went to the table, read the tickets, in order to ascertain where his seat was to be, and seeing that it was placed between that of Madame Laloine and another lady, unknown to him, he changed his for M. Tirlot's, who had been destined to sit by the side of Lise. Picture to yourself the *beau* marquis, trembling with fear, like a child when putting its finger in a pot of cream, for fear he should be discovered; look at him turning suddenly towards the wall, as the waiter enters, affecting to admire an old engraving of Æneas carrying his father Anchises; then, as soon as the servant disappears, finishing his expert manœuvre.

He succeeded, however, and for some time was very uneasy about the trick which he had played. M. Laloine entered, and went to see if the seats and tickets were properly arranged; but as soon as Sterný perceived his intention, he went up to him, spoke about ostrich feathers, contrasted them with those of peacocks and other birds, and Laloine, taking for granted that all was right, was delighted with the marquis, who laughed and chatted, who asked for snuff, found it excellent, and who complimented him upon his good arrangements and better taste. A carriage arrives. The marquis sends M. Laloine to give his hand to the ladies. Laloine runs to the door; finds that it is a lady and gentleman, who ask for a *cabinet particulier*; returns, and Sterný makes a long *rigmarole* speech upon the morality of *cabinets particuliers*.

What is the matter with him? what does he wish? I told you before that love is incompatible with reason; for behold our *Lion* giving himself a great deal of trouble—for what, you may ask? Why, to be seated near a little girl.

Success gained by stratagem atones, in the eyes of many, for the worst of actions; then Sterný should be excused, for he succeeded. The company arrived. Sterný stood at the door which opened upon the dining-room, assured that Lise would not pass without speaking. At last she entered with her mother and sister, when the former said kindly,

“What, Monsieur le Marquis, so soon?”

Sterný replied, looking meaningly in Lise's face, said,
 "One fault in a day is quite enough."

The countenance of Lise crimsoned; she felt the reproach, and retired, displeased, into a corner of the room, determined to have as little to say to the marquis as possible.

A scene somewhat amusing took place as the seats were being taken round the table. Sterný, who knew his, went to instal himself behind his chair, while Lise was searching for hers on the other side.

"Yonder," Prosper cried, pointing to the side where Sterný was; but on observing the marquis, he appeared much surprised.

Prosper then exchanged looks with M. Laloine, who bit his lips in a manner which seemed to say—

"My son-in-law is certainly a fool."

On the other hand, Madame Laloine, who had calculated upon being by the side of the marquis, looked at M. Tirlot with an air of astonishment, whilst he, proud of the honour which had been conferred upon him, sat down in seeming delight. Lise advanced timidly, scarcely knowing what to do, for she had perceived the exchanging of looks and shared in the general confusion. As for Sterný, his eyes fixed upon the ceiling, he saw nothing, and appeared totally ignorant of what was going on. His embarrassment, however, terminated; for he heard M. Laloine say to his daughter,

"Come, Lise, go and sit down."

The manner in which these words were pronounced, announced a forced resignation to the *maladresse* of Gobillon. Whilst Sterný moved his chair to make room for Lise, she saluted him so dryly, that he guessed she was aware that it was not her brother-in-law who had made the mistake. From the first sentence that he pronounced, he foresaw that Lise had determined to answer him only in monosyllables; but he had two hours before him, and that was more than was necessary to make her change her resolution. At first he left her to herself, and directed his attention to the fat Monsieur who was seated on the other side of her, he being no other than the honourable silk-mercier who had entertained him in the morning with his long speech on the sugar question. Sterný renewed the discussion, when each of the opponents was obliged to speak either by inclining before or behind Lise, who at last became so annoyed that she could not prevent herself, by repeated movements, from showing her impatience; but Sterný had no pity: he tormented his opponent to such a degree, that M. Laloine, perceiving them so warmly engaged, exclaimed,

"What are you speaking about, gentlemen?"

"Of sugar cane and beet-root," Lise replied, with a sullen air.

"Ah!" M. Laloine exclaimed, delighted that the question was of so innocent a nature.

Sterný, imagining that it was the moment for attack, addressed his companion,

"Indeed, sir, I am afraid that our conversation has been tiresome to Mademoiselle; we will resume our discussion some other time."

"Willingly," replied the mercer; who perceived that he had allowed the first service to be nearly over without touching anything, and who appeared willing to make up for the time which he had lost.

Lise, however, made no reply; and the *gros mercier* said,

"Is your mother not right, Mademoiselle Lise, in saying that men have lost all their gallantry? You see us two gentlemen by the side of a pretty young girl, and we can find nothing better to speak of than politics. But for me, there is an excuse; I am a father, and have forgotten all. Monsieur, however, who is a young gentleman, ought to have many fine things to say."

"Find, then, some fine things, animal!" thought Sterný, who, seeing the turned-up lip of Lise, scarcely knew what to say. He at last offered her a glass of wine, which she accepted with thanks. A silence then ensued.

"*Allons!*" the lion said to himself, "I am becoming as stupid as a negro. It is high time to begin the attack."

"It is very strange, Mademoiselle," Sterný said, "it is truly unfortunate, that, having had the honour of seeing you only twice, I should have unwittingly displeased you three or four times."

"Me, sir!" Lise replied, in astonishment.

"Yes, you. First of all, this morning, for being after my time; then, at the mayor's, for not taking off my glove; and here, perhaps," he added whisperingly, "for arriving too soon, and——"

"And——" Lise said, looking him in the face.

"And," Sterný added, with a winning smile, "for stealing M. Tirlot's seat."

Lise blushed, and smiled; she was pleased; for flattery has momentary gratifications even to the most stoic. The marquis had played a trick, in a school-boy fashion, to be near her, and that afforded her pleasure. Lise thought not of the purpose of the marquis, nor of the end he had in view; for she was too innocent to entertain an idea of seduction. Shortly after, however, the smile which graced her countenance gave way to sudden embarrassment, and she said to herself—

"He intends to amuse himself with me."

"I see very plainly," Sterný said, "that I have displeased you, in taking this seat."

"Ah! Monsieur," Lise exclaimed, tossing her head, "it matters little to me who took it."

Sterny laughed; then said, rather impertinently,

"I don't believe it—I am sure you would prefer M. Tirlot by your side."

Lise remained silent.

"Is M. Tirlot a relation of your's?" Sterny demanded.

"No, sir."

"Is he a friend?"

No, sir," she again replied, coldly.

"He is, then, one of Prosper's?"

"Yes, sir."

"So much the better," Sterny said, "for M. Tirlot, knowing that I am Prosper's friend, will more readily forgive the *fault* which I have committed."

"Oh!" Lise said, "you are not Prosper's friend."

"Why not? He is a young man I like very much, and would willingly render him any service that is in my power."

"I don't doubt it," Lise replied; "but that's not what I mean."

"I am also sure," Sterny said, "that he respects me very much."

"I am sure of it, but still, you know that you are not friends."

"Why?" Sterny demanded.

"Because," Lise replied, "you are M. le Marquis de Sterny, and he is Prosper Gobillon, feather merchant."

"It is very wrong of you to say so," Sterny said.

"Why?" Lise demanded.

"Is it not as much as to say that the title which I bear makes me proud, haughty, and impertinent?"

"Ah! sir."

"Is it not saying," Sterny added, "that I do not render justice to the honour and worth of those individuals who have not a similar title? It is almost enough to make me regret having been brought up in what is called the higher circles, for you seem to assert we no longer live in an age when worth is due to merit."

Ah, ah! *lion*, what have you made of your crest of nobility? What! what! speaking freely the sentiments of *Le Constitutionnel*, and that with a serious air? Where now are your friends to laugh at you, as you would have done at them, if they had uttered such a sentiment?

Lise, from the serious manner in which Sterny had spoken, said, in an affected tone,

"I thank you, sir, on Prosper's account, for what you have said; I am sure it will make him happy when I tell him."

"Oh!" Sterny replied, "Prosper has known me for a very

long time. We knew each other in childhood, and he is not like you—he does not take me for a dandy or a *lion*.”

“A *lion*! What is that?” Lise said, laughingly.

“Oh!” Sterný replied, “*lions* are beings of this world, who imagine themselves wise and witty, because they laugh at all others, despise everything that is not suited to their taste, and have no other occupation save that of doing nothing.”

“Ah!” Lise said, “I know what you mean; but I pray you to understand that I have not so bad an opinion of you.”

“Not *quite* so bad,” Sterný said; “but not very favourable.”

“I cannot tell you—I do not know,” Lise said, hesitatingly.

“Ah, you must give me an answer; do give me your opinion of me.”

Lise hesitated; then, looking Sterný in the face with an expression of infantine malice, said,

“Well, I will do so, if you will tell me the reason why you took M. Tirlot’s seat.”

Sterný was somewhat embarrassed at this demand. He hesitated; then replied,

“Indeed, I cannot tell you.”

At these words Lise burst into a fit of laughter, which drew the eyes of all the company upon her.

“What is the matter with you, Lise?” M. Laloine shouted out.

“It is,” Lise said, still laughing, “because M. le Marquis—”

“Oh!” Sterný whispered, full of fear lest Lise should relate the trick he had played, “for Heaven’s sake do not betray me!”

“What is the matter?” was again shouted out.

“Oh, nothing at all—an idea,” she replied.

“Come, come, Lise!” the mother exclaimed, frowning on her daughter for her indiscretion.

“Let her laugh,” M. Laloine said, “it becomes her age—she will soon be serious enough.”

Lise had already become so, and was reflecting on her conduct, when Sterný said to her, in a low voice,

“I thank you for having kept my secret.”

“Oh, it is nothing.”

“Still, it gave me a great deal of trouble.” Then he related, in an amusing manner, his fears of detection when the *garçon* entered, and how he had diverted the attention of her father.

Lise listened, half laughing, half vexed, and finished by saying,

“And you did all this without being able to give a reason.”

“I could do so, but I dare not give it to you,” Sterný replied, with emotion.

“What! to me?”

“Yes—to you.”

"You are making sport of me."

"Do you wish me to tell you?"

"I don't know; that depends upon what you have got to say. Ah, no!" she added, "I don't wish to know."

She guessed all; but that was not enough for our *lion*; he wished to speak, for he found pleasure in engaging the attention of Lise.

"This morning, when——"

"Stop, stop," Lise exclaimed, interrupting him, "M. Tirlot is going to sing."

"He is a ridiculous fellow, that M. Tirlot," Sterný said, displeased at being interrupted when about to begin his declaration.

"Ridiculous!" Lise said; "why so, Monsieur?"

"Because I don't like him," Sterný replied.

"For what reason?"

Sterný smiled and said, "First, because he is the bridesman, and had the privilege of walking with you this morning."

"It seems to me," Lise said, in laughing, "that he did not profit much by it."

"And then, because his seat was placed beside your's."

"And he has taken good care to keep it."

"And lastly," Sterný added, "because he is going to dance with you first."

"He has forgotten to engage me," Lise replied.

"In that case, I must have that pleasure. I should like to deprive him of everything."

"How! deprive him of everything?" Lise inquired.

"Yes," Sterný said, gaily; "I delight in robbing him; and if I were by his side, I would eat from his plate, and drink the wine which he had poured out for himself."

"Ah! poor M. Tirlot!" Lise said, pleased with the attentions of the marquis.

"We are going to dance the first quadrille together. Is it not so, Lise?"

"I suppose I must!" said the young girl, smiling.

"As for this M. Tirlot," Sterný added, elated at his success, "I should like even to rob him of his song."

"That would be difficult," Lise said. "Look, he is going to begin."

"It matters not," Sterný whispered, "I will dispute the palm."

"Indeed!" Lise said, in astonishment.

"You shall see!"

M. Tirlot began. He sang four verses, which were tolerably good, both as to measure and rhyme, and which introduced Madame Laloine, M. Laloine, and the new-married couple, M. and Madame Gobillon. M. Tirlot triumphed, for he received the loud acclamations of all present. Lise was highly

delighted; and while applauding, she repented of having deprived him of his *contredanse*. Sterný, however, was in a vein of good humour; he gently touched the elbow of Lise, saying, "Announce that I am going to sing."

Lise rose, held forth her pretty hand, and each was silent; but when she stated that Monsieur le Marquis was about to sing, all were astonished, and expressed their delight at his condescension.

"Pardon, ladies and gentlemen," Sterný said, on rising, "it is not a song; it is only a verse, to complete the spirited *chanson* of M. Tirlot."

M. Tirlot leant forward, and "*Voyons ! voyons !*" was heard on all sides.

Sterný, amidst the most profound silence, and looking at M. and Madame Laloine, sang—

"Le droit sacré de faire des heureux
Est si beau que Dieu nous l'envie."

Then glancing at Prosper Gobillon and his wife—

"Et comme vous, quand on en a fait deux,
C'est bien assez, votre tache est remplie."

At M. and Madame Laloine—

"Et cependant, ce droit que l'on bénit,
N'est pas pour vous épuisé sur la terre."

Then, turning towards Lise—

"Car, en voyant Lise, chacun se dit
Il leur reste en heureux à faire."

Oh Marquis! what a disgrace! a verse *improvisé* at table, and at the nuptials of a feather merchant's daughter. Oh lion! where now is your haughty look, your head raised in pride, and your lip bearing the expression of scorn? Sterný had no time to think, for scarcely had he finished his verse than the room resounded with *bravos* and expressions of delight. Lise, who did not expect such a conclusion, blushed, and hid her face by bending her head; and Madame Laloine, in going to kiss her daughter, said,

"It is true, M. Tirlot, you forgot my Lise."

M. Laloine stretched his hand to Sterný, saying with warmth of heart—

"Thank you, M. le Marquis; thank you."

The mother expressed her gratitude to Sterný, and congratulations were heard on all sides. At last the company rose, and M. Gobillon cried out—

"To the hall!—the ball is about to begin."

Sterný offered his arm to Lise; she took it, and he felt that

her hand trembled. She was confused and embarrassed; but still she seemed cheerful and pleased.

"You are not angry with me, Lise," Sterny said, "on account of the verse which I sang?"

"Oh no!" she said softly; "it made my father and mother so happy."

"And how did you like it?"

"Oh, very much; it was very pretty," Lise replied, casting her eyes downwards.

She then begged to be excused for a moment, as she wished to speak to a few of her friends who had come to the ball, and who had just been told the cause of the plaudits which had shook the walls of the Cadran Bleu. On Lise approaching, they demanded—

"Is it true that the handsome marquis composed a verse upon you?"

If the question had been asked in ridicule, most probably Lise would have denied it; but the *handsome marquis* was pronounced with so much envy, that she replied with affectation,

"Yes, it is true!"

"It seems you have made a conquest of him!" said one of nature's less favoured children.

"Why not?"

"And, without doubt, he has made one of you?" another demanded.

"Who knows?" Lise said, imagining her friends were very impertinent.

"And," said another, "in order to refuse dancing with him, I will go and engage myself for the whole evening."

"Oh, don't give yourself the trouble; these *gants jaunes* never dance."

"Sometimes, Mesdemoiselles," Sterny said, who had stealthily approached them. He held out his hand to Lise, saying, with a respectful air,

"Mademoiselle has not forgotten her promise of dancing the first quadrille with me."

"No, sir, no," Lise muttered, on holding out her hand. It was trembling, and Sterny pressed it.

CHAPTER V.

THE BALL.

Sterny, hurried, as it were, from one step to another, by the charms of Lise, and perhaps delighted with his own success, had not time to reflect on all that he had done; for, had he had

but a moment of leisure, he would have been astonished and frightened on considering how much he had deviated from his accustomed habits.

The orchestra gave the signal for the dance, and Sterný, with Lise by his side, took his place. She was lovely; yes, beautiful as the angels that we see in our dreams, possessing the serenity of innocence and the repose of happiness. Sterný, enamoured by her beauty, contemplated her with the same pleasure as one would a noble piece of sculpture, which, so to speak, glorifies the human form, in showing how truly lovely and how graceful it may be. At that time, Lise, who was trembling by his side, appeared to him to have more charms, to be lovelier, than he had imagined. On her countenance there was an indescribable expression of happiness, of fear, and of astonishment. Something had struck the heart of the young girl; something to which she was unaccustomed, and which delighted her, at the same time causing her fear. Her heart beat, and it seemed that there was in her a new existence that had not before lived, and which was now struggling for life. To woman, God has given, at two distinct periods, this ineffable emotion. The one is produced by first love; the other, when she discovers that she is a mother. But no pen is able to describe that ecstasy and agitation which lighted up Lise's countenance. Sterný, who was looking at her in admiration, could not account for the pleasure which he then experienced. He wished to speak, but his voice faltered; she tried to reply, but her voice faltered, like that of Sterný. They went through the dance in this way: and it was not till he was conducting Lise to her seat, that it struck him that he was about to be separated from her. He whispered,

"Does Mademoiselle Lise waltz?"

"Ah, no! sir; no!" Lise replied, shaking her head, as if waltzing was a pleasure beyond the hopes of a young girl.

"Then," Sterný replied, "you must dance another quadrille with me."

"Yes," Lise said, with evident pleasure; "but will you not dance with some other of the young ladies?"

"With you only, Lise," Sterný replied, with emotion.

"At least with my sister—I pray you to do so!" Lise said, in a supplicating tone.

"With the bride? You are right; and I thank you for having reminded me of my duty."

"And I thank you for consenting," Lise said, with a smile of complacency.

Sterný left her with her mother, and went into another room. In spite of himself, he was happy. Happy! and for what? For having disturbed the mind of a young girl! Poor triumph for a man, whose eye had caused dames the most

wealthy and the most artful to tremble under its glances. Do not ask Sterný why he was happy; he would not be able to answer you, for that strange emotion was as new to him as it was to Lise; and he never thought of examining it, nor of struggling against it. He tried to remain away from the room in which Lise was, but unconsciously he went to the door, and cast a furtive glance round the room. She was dancing; but her heart was not in the dance: her head was slightly inclined, and from time to time she darted a look around. Whom was she seeking? Sterný was afraid that he was not the object; but when she saw that he was present, she no longer looked about. He felt happy at seeing this—a happiness so great, that it caused him fear. He asked himself the reason; and he blushed on endeavouring to find an answer.

“Ah!” he said to himself, “how childish I am becoming! how ridiculous! The devil take me, if I am not tipsy. It is not possible.”

And to assure himself that he was not a man that would allow a passion for a child to govern him, he again bent his looks on Lise. She was dancing with a fine young man, as handsome as our *lion*, and who spoke to her with an air of ease and politeness. At this sight a revolution took place in the bosom of Sterný, and he felt assured that nothing could give him an advantage over his rival. This *chagrin* was increased when he perceived an expression of happiness and tranquillity beaming in the countenance of Lise. The poor girl, on finding that the look of Sterný was fixed upon her, felt happy and proud—an ecstasy which she no longer dreaded, for he was no longer by her side: the contact of his hand, the sound of his voice, no longer made her tremble. A strange doubt pierced the heart of Sterný. He said to himself,

“Is it possible that this girl can be of the *arrière boutique*? Ah! truly, this is too ambitious, my fair one! You are handsome, but your pretensions are somewhat extravagant.”

As these thoughts passed in the mind of Sterný, his countenance took an expression of haughtiness and disdain; and the young girl having glanced at him, was so frightened that she became pale; and her eyes, which were fixed upon him, seemed to say,

“Oh, what is the matter? What have I done to you?”

She no longer heard the fine sayings of her *danseur*; she made three successive mistakes in the dance.

Sterný saw all, and wished to know if it was not a trick? He had no inclination to become the dupe of a tradesman's daughter; therefore, as soon as the dance was finished, he assumed a confidential and indifferent air, and approached Lise and her mother.

“I have many pardons,” Sterný said to Madame Laloine,

without looking at Lise; "I have many pardons to ask you for my thoughtlessness, Madame. In going home, I found this chain with the medallion. It must belong to some of your guests; and I had entirely forgotten to give it to you."

At the words, "some of your guests," Lise gave Sterný a look, which seemed to say,

"Did you not know that it was mine?"

Madame Laloiné thanked Sterný; then said to Lise,

"You see that I was right, in stating that Monsieur le Marquis would bring it to you."

"Ah! it belongs to Mademoiselle," Sterný said, coldly, in presenting it with a haughty air.

"Yes," Lise said, in stretching forth her hand, and looking at Sterný, as if to say, "Am I, then, a child?"

"Give it to me, Lise," the mother said; "I will put it round your neck."

"By-and-by," Lise said, impatiently; and while rolling it up in her handkerchief, she became pale, and her lips trembled. Sterný, satisfied with his manœuvre, said, with affected politeness,

"Mademoiselle has not forgotten that she is to dance a *galop* with me?"

"I do not know," Lise replied, with a melancholy air; "but if mamma wishes——"

"With M. le Marquis?—certainly, certainly," Madame Laloiné said.

The musicians began, and Lise gave her hand to Sterný.

"Why," Sterný said, as they were walking, "why did you not put your chain round your neck? I suppose it is a *souvenir*."

"Ah, yes," she replied, casting her eyes up to heaven, "it serves to make me mindful."

"And," Sterný demanded, "do you believe in the inscription, *Ce qu'on veut on le peut*?"

"Yes, Monsieur; up to the present I have had reason for so doing; and," she added, with emotion, "I trust I shall always believe in it. But we are not dancing, sir."

Sterný threw one arm round the lovely girl, and took hold of the hand in which she held her talisman. They danced thus—he devouring her with his looks, while her eyes were cast downwards, her countenance bearing a melancholy expression. Suddenly a tear dropped from the eyelashes of Lise on to her cheek. Sterný, on observing this, evinced much uneasiness, and, leading her into a corner of the room, said,

"I have offended you, Mademoiselle?"

"No, sir; no."

"But why are you weeping?" Sterný anxiously inquired.

"I am not weeping, Monsieur."

"Listen, Mademoiselle," Sterný said, with an air of frank-

ness; "I do not know anything that I have done or said that could offend you; but if I should have done so inadvertently, I sincerely request your pardon; for, I assure you, such a design never received the sanction of my heart."

"Oh, sir, pay no attention to what I say or to what I do. You must know that, from childhood, being always weak and suffering, I have been much indulged; and amongst other weaknesses that I have, is that of a foolish, a ridiculous susceptibility."

"But how have I wounded that susceptibility?"

"Oh, do not ask me, sir," Lise said; then she added, in apparent trouble, "Let us continue the dance, I pray you."

The galop terminated, and Sterný conducted Lise, as formerly, to the side of her mother. At that moment M. Tirlot came, to claim his privilege of dancing with the bridesmaid; but she said,

"Not yet, M. Tirlot; I am very ill—I suffer much—I am cold."

Sterný looked at Lise; she was pale, and her lips trembled convulsively. Her mother, on seeing her, was much alarmed, and said,

"Come with me, my child."

The poor girl left the room, leaning upon her mother's arm.

"What is the matter with her?" Sterný demanded, addressing himself to M. Tirlot.

"*Ah! mon Dieu!*" Tirlot said, with a pitiful look. "Always the same thing—those frightful palpitations of the heart. The least fatigue hurts her, and a little excitement is enough to kill her."

"To kill her!" Sterný said to himself; "and what have I done? When I looked at her with disdain—when I told her mother of the medallion that I knew belonged to her, and which, although she knew I had it, she never asked for!—perhaps I wounded her sensitive heart, and turned her joy into wretchedness. Ah, poor girl! poor child! Oh, if I had thought so! How foolish I have been! how unmanly my conduct!"

To play with the vanity of a little *prude* of the needle might be very amusing; but to hurt without a cause the sensibility of a child so lovely, and one whose every action attested her goodness of disposition, her pure and infantine simplicity, was truly odious. Sterný found himself guilty, foolish, and brutal, and he heaped curses upon his own head. Thus it was, with the purest motives of friendship, that he remained at the door of the chamber where Lise had taken refuge with her mother. She soon after left the room; was still pale, but appeared calm and resigned; and when she saw the alarmed looks of Sterný, she raised her hand gently to her bosom, showing him the

plaque d'or, which had just been suspended round her neck; the gesture signified, "*Ce qu'on veut on le peut.*"

The smile which accompanied this movement was so sweet, so resigned, that it touched the heart of Sterný. Lise was then suffering, and had suffered much; and all for him—all on his account. He wished to ask her pardon; but, as she would no longer dance, he had no opportunity of doing so, and therefore showed his contrition by appearing before her with a sad and thoughtful countenance. He at last became restless; the people who surrounded him were tiresome—not, as he might have considered, the next day, on account of their ridiculous appearance; but because they looked at him as if they penetrated the secrets of his heart. This idea at length so influenced him, that he was upon the point of leaving; but he could not think of going away without first obtaining the pardon of that weak and gentle creature, whom he had caused to suffer so much. He went up to Madame Laloine, and said, with a grave air,

"If I had been but an ordinary guest at this nuptial feast, Madame, I should have considered myself at liberty to retire without ceremony; but I was Prosper's witness, and I pray you to accept my thanks for having admitted into your family an honest man, who, it may be almost said, belonged to mine."

"I thank you, sir," Madame Laloine said, with emotion, whilst Lise looked at him with tenderness—"I thank you, sir; for it is only your friendship for Prosper that could have induced you to make use of such flattering words to people so humble as we are."

"I assure you, Madame, that from the kindness I have experienced, you and your family shall ever have a claim upon my esteem and gratitude."

In saying this, he turned towards Lise, and bowed, without casting his eyes upon her. He did not then see the radiant smile that illumed her countenance; but he saw that she made an involuntary movement with her hand, as if to take his, and to thank him.

He left; and it was not till he had reached the other end of the room, that he looked back. Lise had her hand resting upon her bosom, and was looking after him; he fixed his eyes upon her, and she did not withdraw hers from him. They thus looked at each other for some time, both forgetting where they were—both trying to read each other's heart. Madame Laloine spoke to her daughter, who seemed to be awaking from a dream; but, before answering, a slight movement of the head had, as it were, said to Sterný,

"Farewell! and thank you!"

CHAPTER V.

THE DEATH OF LISE.

The *lion* left; he was half mad, confused, and stupid. He tried to rally, but could not; for the image of Lise was before him, saying in all her candour and purity, "*Malheureux!* why such behaviour? why insult one whom you know to be good and holy, because she smiled at her own happiness?" Sterny became restless in his carriage: he looked round to see if there was yet a trace left of the innocent Lise; but no; he had once the medallion, but without being asked—to be impertinent—he had returned it to her mother.

In a state of fury, cursing himself for his own stupidity, he arrived at the club of the *lions*. He hesitated; then went up stairs, saying to himself,

"If that booby, Lingard, make but one foolish remark about me, I will strike him!" He then sat down at the gaming-table, lost 500 louis, offended all present by his ill-temper, entered his own house at the break of day, and thought as little of the money he had lost as of his last mistress.

"I shall see Lise again," he said; "I must see her—but how?"

However, when a few hours of repose had calmed his mind, he reflected more seriously, perhaps, than he had ever done before. He was in love—he felt it; he was not ashamed of his passion; but he was afraid of it. To seduce Lise would be base and ungenerous; "for," he said to himself, "she would love me, if I wished; she would love me, I am sure of it; and her love would be so ardent, that, were I to do otherwise than marry her, I might break her heart. That must not be! Well," he added, "I remember that when a child, and very ill, my mother took me to the church, and, placing me upon my knees before the Virgin Mary, made me repeat after her, 'Holy Virgin! who witnessed the death of thy Son, save me for the sake of my mother!' That image which I supplicated has been engraven on my heart as something sacred and ineffaceable, and of which I have never spoken, lest I might be insulted. Lise will be to me like a *souvenir*—a celestial image, of which I had a glimpse, and whose form I will keep in the sanctuary of my soul! Ah! if Lise was not what she is!—if she were a queen!—I would risk my life to win her; I would dare everything, in thinking on the words that she carries near her heart, '*Ce qu'on veut on le peut.*' But she is a feather merchant's daughter; and I cannot stoop so low! No; I must think no more of her. No! no!"

To accomplish this end, Sterný went to the opera, and with that success which always attended his efforts, made a conquest of the *danseuse* who had excited the admiration of his companions. One evening, when seated in one of the boxes of the Théâtre Français, he recognised two females who were looking stedfastly at him: the one was the wife of Prosper—the other Lise.

“How those girls are staring from the opposite box!” the *danseuse* said; “do you know them?”

“No,” Sterný said, blushing, while telling the lie.

“Why, then, do you withdraw to the back of the box? You make me believe that you are afraid.”

“Away with your jealousies!” Sterný said; and on looking out of his box, he perceived Lise, who was evidently speaking about him. Suddenly she lifted her head, and on meeting the gaze of Sterný, she withdrew her eyes, being apparently much agitated. Sterný, in order to escape the insults of his mistress, did not salute the young girl. He rose to leave.

“If you quit my box, I will create a disturbance,” the *danseuse* said, in anger.

He was hesitating whether to go to Lise or not, when his mistress added,

“If you go into the box where that woman is, I will smack her face before your eyes.”

Sterný was transported with rage, and could have stabbed his mistress; but he succeeded in governing his temper. However, when he had conducted her home, he broke all that he could lay his hands on; for, as he would not beat her, he was determined to do her all the evil he could, by destroying all that belonged to her.

Sterný entered his own house in a state of fury. The next day he went to pay a visit to M. Laloine, and was told that there was no one at home—that the family had gone to the country. “In fact,” Sterný said to himself, on receiving this information, “I am indeed a fool! If I saw her, I should again have a palpitating heart; and the young girl would go next day to amuse herself, whilst I—— In fact, I am getting mad!”

Fifteen days passed away; and our *lion*, by dint of indulging in the most extravagant excesses, had all but succeeded in forgetting Lise. Nevertheless, at times, her mild and pensive countenance seemed to appear before him; but it was pale, death-like, and distracted. She seemed staring at him with a look of despair, as if reproaching him for bringing upon himself his own ruin and hers. That image appeared before him, even in his sleep; and in his dreams he saw it watching over him like a guardian angel.

One morning, the servant knocked at his door, and announced that a person of the name of Gobillon desired to speak to him.

Sterny's thoughts had been on Lise all night. He started up, and said,

"Show him up, immediately!"

"Why, what is the matter?" Sterny said, on seeing the sorrowful appearance of Prosper. "You seem very sad for a new married man."

"Ah! it is on account of the grief that there is at home. You remember poor Lise?"

"Well! Lise!" Sterny exclaimed.

Prosper showed him the crape that was round his hat.

"Dead!" the marquis uttered.

"Dead! and is now a saint in heaven."

"*Oh mon Dieu! mon Dieu!*" Sterny exclaimed, in a fit of despair, which frightened Prosper—"Dead without having seen her again! Dead!"

"Alas, it is so!" Prosper said; "I have been to her funeral, and have come to perform her dying wish."

"Her dying wish!" Sterny repeated.

"Listen, Monsieur le Marquis. You must not think ill of the poor child; for, although her mind was too exalted, she had a good heart. The night that she died, I watched at her bedside, with my wife. Lise expressed a wish to speak to me in private; and when we were alone, she asked me to unfasten the chain of hair that she wore round her neck. I did so: then she made signs for me to approach nearer.

"'Prosper,' she said, 'you will give this to the Marquis of Sterny; tell him not to be fickle and cruel to others, as he has been to me. I send him this present, for he will one day be a good and distinguished man—I am sure of it.'

"She then put this medallion into my hand, and an hour afterwards she died, murmuring, '*Ce qu'on veut on le peut excepté être aimé—aimé.*' Then all was over with Lise."

Sterny fell upon his knees, and received this token of pure, of innocent love. For some time, the tears flowed abundantly from his eyes—and it was not till he had become calm, that Prosper left him.

Sterny remained all that day at home, nor could he be seen any of his friends. All were surprised; and their astonishment was increased when they heard that he was about to leave France for a considerable time, and most probably they would have imagined that he was deranged, had they seen him, the morning before his departure, kneeling at the tomb of Lise, offering up a sincere, a fervent prayer, to his Maker.

ROMAULD,

T H E P O A C H E R.

ROMAULD,

THE POACHER.

CHAPTER I.

BRIGITE.

THE village clock struck twelve, and its dying sound was not yet lost in the distance, when Romauld sat up, shook the thick hair from his forehead, passed his hand through his dark beard, stole from the couch upon which he had scarcely had time to repose himself, and approaching the hearth, lighted the fire, the flame of which cast a glimmering light round the cottage, and sufficed to show the emptiness of the room, and the wretchedness of the *chaumière* of Romauld.

Near a disjointed and wormeaten door stood the couch which he had just left; at the opposite extremity, an old chest, with several earthen pots, two stools, and a gun; which scanty articles composed the furniture of this wretched dwelling. Here misery seemed to have taken up her abode, and poverty had set her cheerless stamp on all around: it was the hut of a poor man, whose condition was on a par with that of the dog.

Romauld was no idler; but he could not always find work; or, when he did procure a little, it barely sufficed to appease the cravings of nature.

As soon as he had lighted the fire, he went to the couch which he had just left, leant an attentive ear, then quitted the bed-side, taking the greatest care not to disturb the person who was sleeping.

"She reposes," he said. "Poor Brigitte! May Heaven protect and watch over her during my absence!"

He took from the fire-place an old gun, which he carefully examined by the feeble light of the fire.

Romauld was about thirty-six years of age, and was born in that humble condition which too often baffles the most praiseworthy exertions of those who endeavour to extricate themselves from the slavery to which birth has consigned them. This man had a wife whom he cherished; for, though he was a poor peasant, he had a heart. It was the sick and tortured Brigitte, whose sunken and half-closed eye saw only, in the midst of all her afflictions, the quiet resignation of her husband. In God she found hope—in Him was her trust. Romauld was her sole attendant, and he alone nursed and watched over the pillow of his sick wife; the sight of whose sufferings rendered him more wretched even than poverty—was harder to bear than the cravings of an unappeased appetite. To see the woman that he loved writhe in pain; to see her who had strewn flowers in his path, suffering hourly from a disease which want had brought on, without the means of procuring a few cordials to alleviate her pain—was truly heart-rending. For ten years Romauld had been comparatively happy, and Brigitte was dear to her husband. Days and weeks passed on. The smile of Romauld, when he returned from labour, was to Brigitte a reward for her industry, for the little trouble she took in making his home comfortable; and the hearty welcome and fond embrace of the wife—the cheerful fire—the neat and clean fire-side—did more than amply repay him for the fatigue of his day's labour. Thus they were happy, because they were contented; thus years passed on, and Romauld and Brigitte lived in harmony and peace with all mankind. But, alas! a day came, and Romauld was without employment; nor could he find any. For a time he bore up with fortitude against the vicissitudes of fortune; but, at last, the want of proper nourishment affected the constitution of Brigitte: she fell sick, and Romauld, driven to desperation, became a poacher. Although he broke the laws of his country, yet he thought that man's injustice to man warranted such an act in the eyes of Heaven. The rich were privileged to kill those animals for amusement; he did so to support a dying wife—to prevent himself from starving. Man may consider it a crime—God, never!

Often Romauld quitted the hut, and penetrated into the heart of the neighbouring forest, whilst his poor Brigitte, as he used to call her, slept; and no one can tell the joy of that man's heart, as he returned to his humble *chaumière*, with a stag, or hare, or some other animal, on his shoulder. The prospect of selling it for a sum which would procure a cordial for his Brigitte, and a little food for himself, filled him with joy.

The village of Chaillot could not then, as at present, boast of elegant houses, surrounded by green avenues, with a high road crowded with public carriages and post-chaises. At the period that we allude to, it was a miry hamlet, half covered with old

oaks taken from the forest of Fontainebleau; and the poor peasants who inhabited it lived in miserable huts, similar to the one above described. As most of the inhabitants were driven by necessity to poaching, a careful watch was set upon them by the gamekeepers, who, nevertheless, were often put off their guard by the tricks resorted to in order to escape the severe penalty of the law; and if at times they fell into the ambuscade of the gamekeepers, fearful were the combats that ensued. Since the illness of Brigitte, the household wants of Romauld were multiplied; and when stern poverty had almost driven him to desperation, he saw no other alternative than that of becoming a poacher; profiting, therefore, by the slumber of his sick wife, he placed his gun over his shoulder, with the purpose of going by a secret *route* to the forest.

"A few hours will suffice," he said; "nay, one hour will be enough, if my observations of yesterday do not deceive me."

He opened the door, and saw with joy that the moon was hazy, only giving sufficient light to guide him, and at the same time promising safety by its opaqueness. He returned to the bed of the sleeping Brigitte, kissed her, hurried away from the hut; then directed his course across the gardens of the village, carefully avoiding the places which he thought might be frequented. Just as Romauld had arrived at the open space of ground bordering the forest, a sudden fear came over him, as he beheld one of his old companions standing at the door of his cabin. To meet any one was always looked upon as a bad omen; and if the poacher should afterwards be surprised by the gamekeeper, the individual was considered a spy who lived by betraying others. That fear was increased on the part of Romauld, as it was rumoured that Roger had become an informer of the gamekeeper of Fontainebleau.

"Good luck to you, comrade," Roger said, without making any other movement than that of the lips.

"Good night, Roger; your eye ought to be shut at this hour, since you have lost the use of your gun."

"Our trade is done for, Romauld; every one takes to it."

"Even to such a marksman as you. Is it so?"

Roger made several steps towards Romauld, and stopped before him; then, with apparent kindness, said,

"Romauld, the most skilful is not always the most successful, nor he who takes the surest aim; it is the man who can presage the approach of the bird of prey, and knows how to avoid his talons."

"Is there, then, any danger?" Romauld inquired, with uneasiness.

"Perhaps. Where are you going?"

"To the Apremont."

"The old wolf of Barbison will be there before you."

"Do you think so?"

"I am sure of it; but you are younger and more active than he is—you will give him a good run for it. *Adieu!*"

Romauld entered the cottage, shut the door, and went to bed, saying,

"Poor fool! he will not go where he intended, but is sure to take the opposite direction, where the wolf is now ranging. When once a poacher is taken by following my counsel, I shall be the king's gamekeeper in eight days afterwards."

Romauld moved not, but fixed his eyes upon the door which hid from his view that mysterious man who had spoken in such a strange manner.

"It is a demon that I have met on my way," he said; "and I am sure there is evil in his heart; he hates me, yet he gives advice. Is it true that he has sold himself to the *capitainerie*, and that he discloses the secrets of his old companions? Away with fear! Forward!"

Romauld walked with a firm step to the passage that leads to the place he had fixed on, then stopped and reflected on all that had passed between them.

"Good advice ought not to be despised, and there is no reason why the *garde-chasse* should not be in ambuscade on this side."

At the thought of being caught, a cold shivering came over his frame; he turned suddenly to the left, and directed his steps towards the mounts of Rocher Canon, and was soon in the middle of the forest; but as he knew all its passages, it was not long before he reached the place of his destination.

"This will do," he murmured, in loading his gun; then hid himself behind one of the huge blocks of stones, the grey and sombre colours of which give the place, at certain parts of the beautiful forest of Fontainebleau, the appearance of a desert.

Two hours passed away, but Romauld could see no game, neither did the slightest noise break upon his ear, and whisper—hope. He thought of his wife; he knew that she would require him when she awoke, and that thought troubled him. The coldness of the night froze his limbs, already enfeebled by misery, and expectation and fears added to his sufferings.

At last, a faint sound struck his ear, and his heart beat with joy and inquietude; a buck bounded about twenty feet from him, and frisked under the shadow of some old trees. A flash glanced along the rocks, a report echoed through the adjoining wood, and the poor animal fell under the well-directed aim of the skilful marksman.

Romauld rose, transported with joy, ran towards the roebuck, and laughed and danced like a boy that had stolen an apple, which he eyed greedily before he carried it to his mouth.

"This buck," Romauld said, "will be the life of Brigitte; it is hers; it will fill her poor cabin with 'abundance.'"

He placed it upon his back, bent his way homeward; but just as he was entering the thicket, he heard some one near him calling out,

"Stand! I arrest you in the name of the king, your lawful sovereign."

CHAPTER II

THE ARREST.

That fear natural to man when surprised in doing wrong suddenly seized Romauld. He turned round, and saw Gaspard Ripon, the king's gamekeeper, standing before him, whose unexpected appearance paralysed his senses; and he remained motionless, his eye fixed upon him, without being able to utter a single word. He seemed, like the victim of the basilisk, fascinated by the demon-like and satisfied glances of the gamekeeper.

"I was afraid, my good friend," the latter said, "that my ambuscade would not have succeeded so well; you have come to poach in the king's forests, and it is you who have for a length of time succeeded in killing game; you shall pay dearly for your hunting, my fine fellow. Put the buck upon your shoulder, and follow me."

"Follow you!" Romauld said. "Where?"

"To the office of justice, where you will be judged for the crimes you have committed."

"And Brigitte, my poor wife—she will die—alone, too. No; I will not go with you, Ripon."

The guard advanced, and attempted to seize Romauld; but the latter burst from his hold, stepped backward, seized the muzzle of his gun, and raised the butt-end over his head.

Ripon, to avoid the blow which menaced him, retreated. "Ah! rebel," he cried, "you shall suffer for this;" then went further back, in order to put himself in a defensive position.

Romauld, embracing the opportunity, leaped over a ditch which was at a few yards' distance, darted with the swiftness of the buck which he had just killed, from rock to rock; gained the wood; then, looking round, threw away the fatal instrument which had threatened the life of a man for disputing a morsel of venison. He hastened to his hut, pushed open the door, and fell exhausted upon the floor.

The noise awoke Brigitte, and she attempted to rise, to ascertain the cause of her husband's abrupt entrance; but she was too ill, and sank back upon her pillow.

ROMAULD, THE POACHER.

"Romauld," she said, with a soft and trembling voice, "where have you been, and what have you been doing?"

"Nothing, my dear; lie still. I shall be well in a few minutes."

"No, no, Romauld; I am sure that something is the matter. Tell me where you have been."

"She must know soon; and perhaps it will be better for me to tell her," Romauld muttered. "I have been hunting in the forest, Brigitte; I have killed a buck, and Ripon surprised me."

He continued walking up and down the room with rapid strides, his features contracted with emotion, his hand clenched, and lifted up as if he were going to strike some one.

"Ah! Ripon, cursed instrument of a tyrannical law! The loss of one buck could matter but little to the king; it would have nourished us for days; it would have preserved us from starvation. Roger has been the cause of all this. It was he who betrayed me into the hands of Ripon. Oh, curses on him!"

"You have done wrong, Romauld," Brigitte said; "and the punishment will be terrible! Oh Heaven! what shall become of us? God, have pity, and pardon him for what he has done!"

The forebodings of the terrified wife were too true, and soon realised. At the dawn of day the house was surrounded, and several armed men broke open the door, and seized the poacher who had lifted his arm against the king's guard while performing his duty. Resistance would have been vain. They drew him, heedless of the prayers and cries of the poor wife, towards the door; but on reaching the threshold, "Farewell for ever!" fell upon the ear of the unfortunate man. With a movement of his powerful arms he stretched two of those that held him upon the floor, burst from the others, and ran to the bed of Brigitte, whom he tried to console by telling her that he would soon return. He gave her an affectionate embrace, then went to the soldiers, and said with calmness,

"I am ready to follow you. Lead the way."

Romauld was conducted to gaol, and cast into a foul dungeon, among men whose lives had been continued scenes of crime. The laws, fortunately different now, made no distinction between the errors of a day and a life stained with ignominy. On the right of the poor poacher might be the heartless ruffian who deprived a child of its father—who had rendered its mother a broken-hearted widow; on his left, the man whose hand had been stained with the blood of a rich relative, whom for the sake of gold, he had hurried into eternity. Place of horror! where the victim of an ill-spent hour, or the perpetrator of a hasty and unpremeditated deed, is contaminated by the impure touch of the most blackened criminal. How revolting must it have been to the sensitive heart of the poor poacher, and how sad his thoughts in such a den of criminals, when he heard the

most fearful imprecations, and then reflected upon the purity of his Brigitte, her forlorn and destitute condition!

To describe the anguish that besieged the soul of the unfortunate man when he first entered the prison is impossible. He fell insensible upon a heap of straw, already crowded by other prisoners; and when he recovered, the shouts and cries of the inmates, accompanied with loud peals of laughter, saluted his ear, and added to the load of sorrow under which he was sinking. He could see nothing around him; neither the loathsome walls of the prison, the tattered and filthy clothes of the inmates, nor their uncouth countenances, imprinted with the stamp of reprobation. There was one thing, however, which was far more distressing than all this—a *souvenir*—which rent his heart, and overwhelmed him with grief. Brigitte was dying! and she had nothing to eat; no one to comfort her; she was in wretchedness, and he was far from her, deprived of his liberty.

What tortures did the poor man suffer the first night of his imprisonment! He sank down in a state of despondency, on his pallet of straw; a devouring fire seemed to be in his throat, and his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth. He started up, tried to speak, but could not articulate a word; he groped with his herculean hand for the door of his dungeon, then fell insensible on the floor, and remained for several hours alike unconscious of his suffering and of his being.

When he recovered his senses, it was only to undergo the same torments. Day and night were the same to him; the cheering rays of the sun did not penetrate his dungeon to relieve, for one hour, the darkness which pervaded the place. Like the thoughts which disturbed his bosom, all was gloom, all was cheerless; there was no ray of hope to calm the throbbings of his breast. The only one he cared for; the only being that endeared this world to him—his poor wife—was, most probably, no more; was, perhaps, dying of starvation!

The day fixed for the trial at length arrived, and Romauld was brought before his judges. Unlike the criminal who makes theft his calling, who knows almost as well as his judge the penalty that the law will inflict, Romauld was not only ignorant of the sentence that was about to be passed on him, but also of the decree against poaching, enacted in 1601. While the act was being read, each word seemed to strike him with terror, and he rose several times to speak; but the judges ordered him to sit down till the act, which ran thus, was finished:—

“All merchants, artizans, and labourers detected killing game, will be subject to the following penalties:—For hunting stags, hinds, or fawns, 83 crowns; wild boars, hares, and other animals of game, 41 crowns. In default of payment the culprit will be flogged or imprisoned. If a second time he be caught

breaking the law, he will be flogged round the wood or forest where he has committed the deed."

When the act was read, the poor poacher trembled. He remonstrated with the judges by saying, that if they took circumstances into consideration, they would find that his crime was not of so grievous a nature; but no attention was paid to him. At last, losing all self-possession, he hurled forth curses against the rich, who, in the midst of plenty, would allow their fellow-man to suffer the gnawings of starvation.

"Judges," he said, "and judgers betwixt right and wrong, how nobly you fill your office! I was driven from necessity to rob—remember, not the poor man, nor the rich—and you sentence me to be flogged or imprisoned. Would you have had me to remain at home, and watch, in my poor wife, the different stages of starvation? Would you have had me to listen to her faint cries of hunger, and have nothing to give her? If I had done so, my crime would have been heinous in the sight of God, and unnatural in the eyes of every human being."

One of the judges rose, commanded him to be silent, and said that such language was not permitted in court; but Romauld, heedless of his threatening look, continued:—

"You may punish me for breaking a law made by those who never tasted of the bitter dregs of poverty; you may punish me for sympathising with the sufferings of a dying woman. The rich and powerful have seldom such a feeling towards the poor; their hearts are too often steeled to the sufferings of their fellow-creatures."

As Romauld could not pay the stipulated fine, his judges, in revenge for his insolence, condemned him to be flogged.

When the day appointed for him to receive his punishment had arrived, he was tied to a stake. His whole appearance bespoke extreme dejection; but at the sound of a voice which was familiar to his ear, he raised his eyes, and saw standing in his presence the man who had so basely betrayed him, the sight of whom seemed to change the nature of Romauld; his eyes were instantly lighted up with rage, and his whole frame shook violently.

Roger, dressed in the garb of a gamekeeper, coloured, and averted his eyes from the stern and revengeful gaze of the poacher; but the latter rivetted his look upon him, and even while his back was torn with the lashes he did not withdraw his eyes, and seemed almost insensible to the blows. When Roger lifted his head, he saw in the countenance of Romauld an indefinable expression of rage, of hatred, and contempt, which generally succeeds violent agitation, followed by an immutable resolution of revenge.

The crowd, after having witnessed the flogging, dispersed; and Romauld, disgraced and insulted, stood alone. He gazed

after those that had congregated—some to see the punishment of the law inflicted, some to insult, and others to pity him. At last, recovering himself, he thought of Brigitte, and smiled at the idea of being free. He rushed like a dart from the place of his degradation, quitted the town, reached the forest, and did not halt till he came within sight of his hut. When he arrived, his heart throbbed violently; he knocked at the door, but no one came; he then burst it open, and a moment afterwards stood at the bedside of Brigitte.

CHAPTER III.

DEATH OF BRIGITE, AND EXECUTION OF ROMAULD.

Romauld remained horror-struck for several minutes, gazing on the corpse of his departed wife. When he left the bedside his countenance was pale and livid, and his eyes expressed the wildness of a disordered mind.

Did she die of hunger? Oh, maddening thought! Had no one in his absence called to give food and administer consolation to the afflicted Brigitte. Yes, yes; some kind angel has been here! This bottle, which contains some cordial, testifies it.

Romauld was awoke from his painful reverie by one of his neighbours—a poor woman, who entered; she who had attended his wife during his imprisonment. He blessed her for her kindness, and expressed his sorrow that he had no other means of showing his gratitude.

After ascertaining the time and manner of Brigitte's death, he hastened to the pastor of the village; and the good old man, saddened by the afflictions of Romauld, manifested a feeling heart by instantly providing for the interment of the poacher's wife.

When Romauld had fulfilled the last sad duty to the remains of his departed Brigitte, he sank down upon her grave, and the tears of sorrow gushed from his eyes—tears which helped to relieve the oppression that weighed so heavily on his mind. Hours passed away, and he was still seated on the tomb, beneath which lay in death the being who had first lit up hope in his bosom; but now, the last rays of that blessed feeling were for ever extinguished in the horizon of his life. Would he return to his *chaumière*? No, no; in it the hand of desolation had been at work—the soft voice of Brigitte was no longer to be heard welcoming his return. Would he go to the town? No; the people would point at him, and whisper to their companions,

“Look! there's Romauld, the flogged poacher!”

Amidst such gloomy thoughts the unfortunate man, for the first time for several days, fell fast asleep—yes, on the cold turf he reposed, a living monument over the dead Brigitte; his countenance, distracted even in sleep, speaking a language more powerful than that of the sculptured marble, and whispering to our hearts that man is selfish—that man is inhuman, to allow, in the land of plenty, a fellow creature to suffer from want. Oh that the purse-proud lordlings were suffered to undergo, for one week only, the pangs of poverty to which hundreds of their worthy fellow countrymen are exposed, deprived of the means of extricating themselves! Perhaps then the poor might have justice—perhaps then the rich would aid them, and sympathise with their sufferings, on reflecting on what they had themselves experienced.

When Romauld awoke, he gazed around, fixed his eyes upon the grave of Brigitte, brushed away the tear that started to his eye, and, clenching his hands, looked up to heaven, while an expression of deep revenge escaped from his lips. He rose, and hurried to his hut; then, kneeling on the threshold, vowed, with the intent of appeasing the departed spirit of his wife, that he would neither eat nor drink while the author of all his woes—he who had betrayed him—lived. He went to the fireplace for his gun, having forgotten that he had thrown it away the day previous to his being taken prisoner; but, on not finding it, he drew forth a dagger which he had secreted near the chimney, and left the hut. For some time he went prowling about the woods in search of Roger, carrying in his looks defiance and hatred; and when hunger assailed him, instead of diverting his mind from the hated object, it seemed rather to increase his feeling of revenge. On his way he saw two women seated on the grass, enjoying a frugal repast; he fixed his eyes upon them, would fain have asked a mouthful, but remembering his oath, passed on. At last he reached the middle of the forest, where there was a narrow and solitary passage, which the gamekeeper usually traversed on his way home.

“I will hide here,” Romauld said; “he must pass in this direction.”

To satisfy this dreadful passion—revenge, which may be truly termed the genius of evil—the poacher waited patiently the approach of the gamekeeper; and when his eye, which was earnestly fixed upon the road, caught a glance of his betrayer, he prepared for the dreadful attack.

Roger, far from dreading danger, was quietly proceeding homeward, when a strong hand grasped him by the throat, and a moment afterwards he lay stretched at the feet of the poacher.

Roger called for assistance, and made several efforts to disengage himself, but the gripe of a man dead to all other feel-

ing save revenge was upon him, and it would have been as easy for the hawk to escape from the talons of the vulture, as the gamekeeper to free himself from the hands of the poacher. The latter, transported with a savage joy, burst into a fit of laughter, which reverberated in the heart of the gamekeeper like the knell which announces to the criminal that the gates of eternity are opening to him, when doubt and fear rack his soul, as he takes a last fond look of this world—rendered, by his being hurried from it, truly beautiful—and steps into the fearful gulf that leads to the abode of mystery.

The poacher seized his dagger, and was preparing to strike, when his eye rested upon the pale countenance of the trembling gamekeeper, which seemed to say,

“Thou art an assassin, and I die by the hands of a coward.”

Romauld threw the dagger from him.

“True, true” he said—“there must be blood drawn; but though you took advantage of me, I will deal fairly with you.”

At that instant he seized a piece of wood, broke it in two, and presenting one half to Roger, exclaimed,

“Take this—now, for life or death!”

There never was a fight between two men of a more desperate nature; both were powerful and well skilled in giving and parrying off blows, and the fear of death to the one, and the deep-rooted revenge of the other, stimulated them to the greatest exertions. With amazing rapidity blows were dealt on both sides, and the blood began to stream down their faces. Roger defended himself with the energy of despair, and used his utmost dexterity in warding off the blows; but Romauld was not only more skilful, but at this moment possessed superhuman strength, and his oft-repeated blow carried with it deadly effect. At last Roger fell upon his knees, and Romauld grasped his stick with both hands, raised it above the head of the gamekeeper, who shrank from the pending blow, in calling for mercy; but the former, unheeding—or perhaps not hearing him—struck him on the head; his skull was fractured, and the gamekeeper breathed his last.

The poacher for a few minutes gazed upon his victim with delight, but his vengeance was soon satiated, and his eye, instead of beaming with joy, expressed horror at the crime which he had committed. He now saw that the fruit of revenge was remorse—that vengeance entails misery and woe; he looked at his blood-stained hands, then at the bleeding corpse of the gamekeeper, and in agony of soul exclaimed,

“Am I, then, a murderer? Yes; and what is more, I have rendered a child fatherless, and its mother a widow. Oh, horror!”

On leaving the spot of desolation he cast several looks behind, and when out of sight gazed up to heaven, praying God

to pity him; then taking a direct course towards the town, walked with a firm step till he reached the prison door, at which he knocked, and on its being opened said to the jailor,

"Behold a murderer! I have assassinated the king's game-keeper!"

When the day for the trial of Romauld arrived, he appeared calm and resigned, and seemed to look upon the fate that awaited him as one which he truly merited. He had repented, it is true—but there is no degradation in repentance; he was a man of principle, although a criminal.

"I premeditated the death of Roger," he said; "I thirsted for revenge. He died by my hands, and I must submit to the penalty of the law."

When the sentence was pronounced—"That he should die on the scaffold"—the blush of shame crimsoned his face, and his frame became slightly agitated.

The day of execution at length came; and, firm and unmoved, Romauld looked placidly on the mass of people that had congregated to see him die. Among the crowd, old men and women might have been seen shedding tears, whilst saying,

"Poor Romauld! and is one so good as you to suffer such a death—one so kind and so benevolent? How often have I called upon you when I had nothing to eat, and although you had but little, you always shared it with me. Lack-a-day! who would have thought of this?"

The unfortunate man remained firm to the last; and before giving the signal, said to those around him,

"That one day of error may lead to the most heinous crime, and, above all, when followed by revenge."

Thus the poor poacher, more the victim of poverty than of crime, ended his days upon the scaffold, adding another to the long list of those who have been sacrificed by tyrannical and oppressive laws.

JENNY,

THE FAIR DEBUTANTE.

JENNY.

CHAPTER I.

FLOWER-MARKETS OF PARIS.

PARIS will soon be a vast *parterre*. The goddess Flora is spreading her incense around, and in every quarter altars are raised for her worship.

Do you love flowers? They are sold everywhere; and, before long, we shall have, in lieu of trees, thanks to the gas which consumes their roots—only roses, jessamines, and sweet-smelling flowers. There will be less shade, it is true; but how much preferable the odour?

A French king said,

“A court, without ladies, is a spring without flowers.”

Nevertheless, under the reign of Francis the First, there were not three flower-markets at Paris; and when we love the fair sex, we must necessarily love flowers, for you know that we can scarcely speak of the one, without comparing them to the other. Since Tibullus, Catullus, and Properce, till Dorat, Parny, and Gentil-Bernard, how often has it been said that woman is a flower? All play-writers attest the same, and hundreds of couplets have been composed to that effect.

In former times, flowers could only be procured twice a week.

It was only on the Quay, near the Palais-de-Justice, that the country gardeners and florists of the capital established, every Wednesdays and Saturdays, their fragrant merchandise.

Then, on these days, the adorned and sweet-smelling quay was, at an early hour, the rendezvous of young men and girls, grocers and grisettes from all quarters of Paris, who went to purchase a modest pot of daisies, or sometimes to raise their pretensions to a pink, or a box of myrtle.

The medical and law students, and all the studious youth of that Latin quarter, also favoured the Flower Quay with a visit, more, perhaps, to gaze at the fair *promeneuses*, than to purchase

bouquets. Then, about two o'clock, ladies of fashion made this their resort, who did not disdain to descend from their carriage to buy a *cactus grandiflores*, or a *rosa centifolia*.

And again, in the evening, just as the vendors were about to terminate their day's labour and return to their firesides, the modest lodger, desirous of purchasing a pot of myrtle to adorn his window, might have been seen bargaining, in spite of the high words of the police, who frowned, at that hour, upon every pot that met their eye.

Then the concierge, or porter, left his lodge in the charge of an officious neighbour, fled to the quay to purchase a pot of *basilisks* or *convolvuluses*, with which he passed his leisure hours.

Other times, other modes and amusements. Yet the Flower Quay is still frequented. It has even the reputation of being the best of the three markets of the capital, which reputation is not usurped.

At all events, the young girls of the Marais, the house-keepers of the Porte St. Denis, when they purpose making a present of a flower, they do not require to traverse half of Paris on foot, or to take an omnibus, to satisfy their fantasy, for which they paid twelve sous to effect the purchase of a pot of *violets*, at six. You will agree that that consideration must have affected the interests of the flower girls. A market for each quarter was requisite, even as a flower for each pod; because, to so many young girls, who pass their days at work, the resting even of their eyes upon a little verdure—upon the bud that is opening, upon the petal from which exhales a sweet and perfumed odour—is a soft relaxation. Flowers are the only superfluities in which the poor indulge; we ought, therefore, to secure to them this indulgence at a small price. A superfluity which creates even a momentary happiness, has almost the right to assert its claim as a necessary.

At present, the Marais has its flower-market upon the Boulevard St. Martin, in front of the Chateau d'Eau; and every Monday and Thursday we cannot gather, but we can choose a pink, a jessamine, or a dahlia.

The vicinity of the Chateau d'Eau spreads over the Boulevard a fresh and agreeable odour. The trees that have been planted and transplanted so often since the Revolution will, perhaps, at last, take root, and their extended branches may shade all beneath.

Poor trees! they are stubborn; as if they wished to punish us for uprooting those that protected and endeared the promenade of our ancestors.

In expectation that the sycamore of the Boulevards of the Chateau d'Eau may soon be overhung with huge branches and green leaves, seats have been ranged along the foot of the trees, no doubt, with the intention of attracting the passers-by in offering them facilities for repose.

The fashionables and the dandies are not yet seen lolling on the seats of the Boulevard of St. Martin; but, to make up for that, by dint of *bous enfans*, *tourloarous* may be seen there. In course of time, it may become a second Boulevard de Gand. The good people say that Paris was not made in a day.

But, in fine weather, on Mondays and Thursdays, people of all ages and classes are seen on these seats; for then, the sight of the flowers, set off to advantage by the respective vendors, renders that walk agreeable; and at all times it is much cleaner than the flower market of the Quay.

Then the elegant and fashionable quarter, the neighbourhood of bankers and of opera dancers, of dandies and of *petites-maitresses*, of *lions* and of *rats*—the Chaussée d'Antin—has also its flower-market, which has advantages, being established against the Magdalene Church, on an elevated piece of ground, and consequently out of carriage reach, and almost always dry.

This market ought to be the best of the three; and the prettiest flowers, and the loveliest women, the plants the most rare, and gowns the most fashionable, ought to be seen there. But it is not so: that market, which is held every Wednesday and Saturday, is in general little frequented, and offers to amateurs only a very scanty variety of flowers. The *petites-maitresses* are desirous enough of wearing bouquets, but they do not purchase any themselves. They are perfectly right—bad habits are not easily left off.

You see that each day of the week you can now, without leaving Paris, walk in the midst of roses, of dahlias, and of range trees; and to those who would now say to us, as Jean Jaques did to his contemporaries, that Paris was a city of noise, of mud, and of smoke, we would reply, that all is changed into a *parterre* studded with flowers.

CHAPTER II.

THE WRITING-MASTER.

It was on a Wednesday, and about a year ago, when the market on the Quay presented a gay and charming aspect. Shrubs, covered with flowers, captivated the sight and rendered the smell pleasing. Numerous visitors were walking up and down the market; some for optical enjoyment, others for the choice of flowers, in which they seemed embarrassed, for all was flattering to the view.

In the midst of this world, which stopped before the flower-stalls, was a little old man, dressed in what, years gone by,

might have been termed black—for his habiliments appeared as if they had run through a whole generation.

That little man, whose dried and shrivelled body appeared as much worn as his coat, wore a wig, which at one time might have been fair, but which time had changed into red. By influence of long wear and tear, friction, and manipulation, it was worn round the edges, so that it did not reach further than the ears, leaving exposed his grey hairs, which ill harmonised with the rest of the coiffure, and which could not be concealed under a hat which age had rendered brown, with brims so small, that the question might arise in the mind of an observer, the possibility of his saluting any one?

Nevertheless, his attire, more than modest, saddened not the heart; for, under his threadbare coat and short peruke, the little man seemed the happiest creature imaginable; his little, grey eyes, sparkled with vivacity, a smile curled his lips, and in walking he rubbed his hands like one who had concluded a good bargain, or who was perfectly content with himself.

After having walked for some time on the quay examining the finest plants, and occasionally putting his nose to one to inhale the odour, the old man went up to a flower girl whose merchandise was of a cheap nature, and putting his finger to a little pot of violets, said,

“How much is that?”

“That violet? Six sous, sir.”

“What! six sous? And dare you tell me that?—an old customer, too!”

“I do not know whether you buy often from other people, but this is the first time that you have come to me.”

“Bah! you forget. Do you not remember me? Why, there is not a Wednesday nor Saturday but I am here. I adore flowers, and if I had a garden—Oh God! if I had a garden, it would be a paradise indeed; but I have only a window, and that is not very large! I will give you two sous for this pot; that’s quite enough, I know.”

“Four; nothing less.”

“I have told you that I am a customer; every second month I renew my violets, for they are the flowers of my choice. They are not the dearest, I know; but, to my taste, they are the sweetest. Agreed, then; here, take your money; I never purchase on credit.”

“No, sir, four sous; nothing less.”

“If Monsieur will not take it, I shall buy it,” said a young girl, who had been examining some other flowers.

The old man raised his eyes, looked at the person who opposed him in bidding for the pot which he had fixed upon.

It was with a feeling of anger that he raised his eyes to the new-comer, but his resentment passed away at the aspect of two

pretty black eyes, lively and spiritual, a well-shaped nose, a little mouth furnished with a set of well-ranged white teeth, and a countenance at once fresh, pretty, and amiable—three things pleasing in the extreme, and which are not so often united in one person as people imagine.

Under his threadbare coat the little man concealed a heart sensible to the influence of beauty; and, perhaps, even he would not have worn so bad a costume, had it not been for his too great sensibility.

There are men who pass their youth in scenes of folly, and their old age in regretting that they can no longer indulge in such scenes.

Instead of reproaching the young girl for wishing to buy that which he was bargaining for, M. Alexandrin (the name of the old man) took up the pot, and presented it to the young girl, saying,

"I do not regret losing it, seeing that one flower is about to be united to another."

The young girl smiled.

A compliment always creates pleasure, especially if it be not sought for; so, instead of taking the violets that were presented to her, the fair girl replied,

"Oh, sir, I made the offer without thinking that it would offend you. Perhaps you have a desire for this flower; I know very well that there are plenty of them upon the quay, but sometimes we take a liking for one more than for another. You have it, sir; for I will not buy it."

"No, Mademoiselle; I am too happy in ceding it to you, and I trust it is not with the idea of revenge for your offering so much. Only, Mademoiselle, if you have an inclination to act amiably, you will permit me to be the bearer of your purchase. This pot might spoil your robe and soil your white hands, but as for me, I have nothing on that will spoil, as you may plainly see. My age must reconcile you to the disinterestedness of my proposition; no one can suppose that I am your sweetheart. Permit me, then, to be your porter; you know old age must also have its privileges."

The young girl looked at the old man, who had shouldered the pot as a soldier does his musket, and could scarcely help laughing at the strange air of the porter; then she replied, with a gracious look,

"Well, I accept your offer, sir, provided that you carry the pot to my room, and I lodge on the sixth floor. Remember, I have warned you."

"Were it upon the Tower of Notre Dame, or the Column of the Place Vendôme—were it upon the summit of the Obelisk, or the famed Column of July—I would climb up with joy to accompany you."

In saying these words, M. Alexandrin raised his hand to his hat to salute his new acquaintance; but this he only did in form, for the brim was so frail, that the owner did not dare to touch it, lest it should take its leave of the hat.

The young girl took the route, followed, or rather elbowed, by M. Alexandrin, who now skipped along, now hopped, for fear that he might have the appearance of being fatigued.

The person towards whom he showed so much gallantry might have been about twenty, at the most. Her dress was neat, yet simple: a cotton gown, of various folds, a black apron, a handkerchief thrown loosely over her shoulders, and a bonnet that concealed her cheeks, but left exposed the whole of the upper part of her head, completed her costume.

Was she a grisette, a sempstress, a waiting-maid, or a shop-girl?

It is somewhat difficult to tell which; for, at Paris, people dress so much alike, that it requires long custom to guess, at first sight, what is the real position or profession of any one.

The young girl crossed the Place-du-Palais, turned up the Rue de la Harpe, and did not stop till she reached the Rue des Mathurin, when she halted before a house as old as the quarter itself, and entered a dark alley, saying to her companion,

"It is here, sir; take care; the passage is dark, and the stairs are slippery; but, when you get hold of the hand-rail, you are all right."

The little old man began, perhaps, to think that he had carried his gallantry a little too far. Nevertheless, he groped his way, holding in his left hand the pot, which he pressed against his breast, and with his right he searched for the happy rail, that was to serve as a thread to conduct him up a labyrinth, which was designated stairs.

The young woman, who took the lead, walked with that surety which results from habit; whilst the old man followed, striking himself every instant against the wall.

"It is somewhat high, sir," said the young girl, turning round to her companion, "a hundred and fourteen steps to climb!"

"I didn't count them," said the old man, "but I shall be very glad when we are at the top."

"Here we are; this is my room."

CHAPTER III.

JENNY.

The young girl opened a door, and entered a small room, modestly furnished, in which it would have been difficult to have found a superfluous object, but where everything was arranged with order, and everything was well dusted and clean.

The fair *locataire* hastened to relieve the old man of his burden, which he still held between his arm, and presented him a chair, saying,

"Now, sir, I hope you will take a share of my humble repast. I did not impose upon you the obligation of mounting so high, but with this view; and I am certain that you will not say 'no' to my request. But, beforehand, as it is natural for you to desire to know who your entertainer is, I will relate to you, in a few words, the whole of my history:—

"My name is Jenny Desgrillon, and I am daughter of honest tradespeople, who brought me up as a picture-colourer, which business I still follow. Three years ago I had the misfortune to lose my parents, who, in dying, recommended me to one of their friends, a M. Benoit, grocer. This M. Benoit has a son, M. Fanfan, who is now paying me his addresses, and is desirous of marrying me; but, for my part, I must avow that I have no love for M. Fanfan, and that I care very little about being a grocer's wife; on the contrary, I have a decided predilection for the stage. Yes, sir, I should like to become an actress—to personate noble characters, to appear before the public, to receive the applause of the world, to wear fine dresses, to be one day a princess, the next day a peasant, now English, now Polish—to hear a handsome chevalier declare that he adores me, that he will kill himself for me!—or a skilful artist, in eulogising me in poesy, swear that I am divine, in the air of 'Baiser au Porteur,' or the 'Famille d'Apothecaire.' Ah! that certainly must be happiness, of which I dream in my waking moments, even when I'm painting Blue Beards and Tom Thumbs. But how can I become an actress, how make my *débüt*, when I know no one, except the family of the Benoits, who are satisfied in seeing giantesses and wax figures. Ah! sir, you see that I require counsel, assistance; and your age and countenance inspired me with confidence—for an idea crossed me that you might be of service to me!"

"Mademoiselle!" said the old man, after having listened to the young girl without interrupting her, "your confidence

does me honour; but as one confidence is worth another, I will also tell you who I am.

"My name is Triptolema Erasistrate Alexandrin; my grandfather was a schoolmaster, my father an author; and, for me, I give lessons in writing and versification, at twenty sous the copy-book. That's very cheap, for I have a very good hand; but the steel pens hurt us very much; with these pens every one professes to write, without having the least idea of the beauty of a hair or bold stroke. Notwithstanding, I could have been able to have gained an easy livelihood, without being obligated to wear my clothes so long without a change, had it not been, also, for an unlucky predilection, which too often made me neglect my pupils—that passion, Mademoiselle, was also that of the stage."

"How, sir? you wished to be an actor!" said the young girl, repressing, with trouble, a smile of mockery, which might have excited the ire of the old man.

"No, Mademoiselle, I had no desire to be an actor; an author, a poet, a man of letters—was the aim I had in view. But, indeed, I am truly an author; for I have already written at least thirty pieces, including dramas, vaudevilles, and tragedies—yet not one has been honoured by a representation; and still, my dear girl, it would be truly astonishing if, in my thirty pieces, there was not at least one *chef-d'œuvre*. They do not repulse me, nor deride me—no; but they will not listen to me. The influence of this party, and the jealousy of another, keep the ears of the directors deaf to me. Still, I relax not; I always go on writing—writing; I find subjects for pieces in the most trifling incidents—in a carriage that runs foul of another, in a chimney-stalk that falls on a passer-by, in a policeman who runs after a thief, in a husband who deceives his wife, in a wife who is faithful to her husband. I send manuscripts to all the theatres, from the Opera to the Petit Lazary, from Bobino to the Renaissance. In a month or six weeks I may have eight of my pieces at rehearsal; and on seeing you, Mademoiselle, on admiring your smiling mien—spiritual and artful, I said to myself, 'What a charming Abigail for Moliere! what a pretty page!' and I will not conceal from you that that thought added much to my desire to carry the flower-pot for you."

"How, sir? you are an author!" exclaimed the young girl, her face beaming with delight.

"As much as one can be who has not yet had his works in the press."

"Oh, how glad I am that I met you, M. Alexandrin! You will give me lessons in elocution; you will hear me repeat my parts; you will tell me if I pronounce well."

"Willingly, my good girl; besides, I know my authors by heart—Racine, Voltaire, Moliere, Picard."

"For me," interrupted Jenny, "I only know the pieces by Victor Ducange and M. Scribe; but I have an excellent memory—I can learn a long part in a night."

"I shall read to you my thirty pieces, my dear Mademoiselle, and you can choose from them a part that will suit, and I shall make you repeat it."

Between an author and a tyrothespian an acquaintanceship is easily formed.

The author was a little too old, and the actress too young; but the experience of the one ought to be useful to the other. Both sat down to table, enchanted at having met each other.

During the whole time that the dinner lasted, the lovely Jenny recited scraps from different plays, and old Alexandrin related to her in detail the intrigues of the respective pieces. The one did not listen to the other, but both seemed delighted at what they said themselves. Jenny and Alexandrin are not alone in the world in this respect, for such is one of the failings common to man.

When the dinner was nearly over, a young man entered the room, holding in his hand a small bag filled with prunes. It was M. Fanfan Benoit, who came to present his *dévoirs* to the fair *enlumineuse*, by whom he was touched to the heart, and to whom he proffered the suasive present of a pound of prunes.

As the young grocer entered the apartment, Jenny, who had recently seen the performance of "Paul and Virginia" at one of the suburban theatres, seized the old writing-master by the arm, and, hurrying with him through the room, she took an umbrella, which she held over her head, to imitate the storm-scene, where the fair Virginia secures a shelter for her adored Paul.

M. Fanfan was astounded to see Mademoiselle Jenny crouching in the corner of the room with a man, and both under an umbrella. Approaching with inquietude, he said,

"Does it rain with you, Mademoiselle?"

For a reply, the old writing-master, who was well versed in his part, drew the young girl to the other end of the room, crying,

"It is M. de la Bourdonnaye who wishes to take you away. Virginia; but no one shall snatch you from my arms."

M. Fanfan regarded this scene with a look of bewilderment, but the sight of the grey hairs of the person who was hiding himself under the umbrella with Jenny, dissipated the inquietude of the young grocer; and, not fearing a rival in the old man, whom he now saw for the first time, he waited patiently for an explanation of the scene which was passing before him.

At last, Paul and Virginia came to a conclusion; and the young *enlumineuse* advanced towards M. Fanfan, and, presenting the old man, said,

"This is M. Alexandrin, author."

The grocer, allowing his large eyes to fall upon the threadbare apparel of the old man, muttered,

"Author! eh! author! What does one sell when one is an author?"

Mademoiselle Jenny burst into a fit of laughter, saying,

"Ah! here's a question that savours a little of grocery."

"Sir," said old Alexandrin, approaching the young man, "an author makes men dream; he makes them laugh or cry; in a word, he amuses them. The worst that he can do is to send them to sleep; but, even then, it is an enjoyment which he imparts, for sleep is an excellent thing. You see, then, that he is a valuable man, a man almost divine. Formerly altars were raised to him, now he prefers purchasing houses; it is less glorious, but there's more substance."

"Ah, they buy houses," replied Fanfan Benoit, his eyes still fixed upon the threadbare coat of the old man; "then it is a good business; if I had known, I would have taken to it. Never mind, Mademoiselle Jenny; here's a pound of prunes, of the best quality, that I have brought on the part of my father, who told me to tell you that he expects you to dinner tomorrow, that he might speak to you about our marriage, because he wishes us settled, as he is anxious to retire from business, and to leave me the shop."

"M. Fanfan," replied the young girl, in rolling up various pictures, destined to illuminate 'Mother Goose,' "if it is for that that your father has sent you, he might have spared you the trouble, for I neither wish you nor your prunes. I will not be a grocer's wife, I will be an actress. Instead of passing my days at a counter, in serving the servants of the neighbourhood, I will shine upon a stage—I will be ogled, applauded, worshipped, and every journal will speak of me. Ah, what pleasure! what glory! My name will be upon the bills—I will see it a hundred times a day, at the corner of each street. This gentleman, who knows all about theatres, tells me that I have the qualities of an actress—of a star. He is going to give me lessons, and will teach me to recite, and will hear me repeat my parts. Isn't that much better than selling coffee and sugar? Be assured, then, that I will not marry you."

Having energetically concluded with these words, which were too plain for the grocer, she bundled up her pictures, and went out, saying,

"Adieu, M. Fanfan; I am going to take in my work, when I shall buy three pieces, in which I wish to play. M. Alexandrin, wait a little; you will give me my first lesson."

CHAPTER IV.

THE DEBUT.

The young girl left; the poor grocer seemed petrified; and the old man continued popping his hand in the bag, saying,

"My dear friend, we must never oppose strong inclinations to any honourable calling; when one has a decided predilection, that one must possess great talent. Look at me, for instance. I was born a man of letters. If I had not been obliged to give lessons for my livelihood, my name would have been renowned by this time; but that will soon be. The fine arts! the fine arts! We must give up all for that fire which circulates in our veins! Besides, *Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret*. I beg your pardon—I am speaking Latin, and that is not in your way. Your prunes are excellent; I am eating them, as I devour the contents of a favourite volume, without perceiving it."

The young man did not discover that his bag was nearly empty, nor did he hear what the old man said. Bewildered by the words of Jenny, he remained for a long time without the power of speech. At last, heaving a deep sigh, and passing his hands across his eyes, he cried,

"Let her but be happy, that is all I desire; I thought she would have been so, at the head of a prosperous shop; but, since that does not please her, she is her own mistress. Adieu, sir."

The young Fanfan Benoit hurried away, to the great regret of the old poet, who entertained the desire of seeing the last of the bag of prunes.

It was not long before Mademoiselle Jenny returned, bringing with her several plays. She chose a part, recited what she knew by heart, and read what she did not. It was her first lesson from old Alexandrin, who did not leave her till he had promised to return the next day, to hear her repeat her part.

The old man kept his promise. For fifteen days he never once failed to call on the fair *entamuseuse*, who, in studying vaudevilles and dramas, totally neglected to paint her "Cinderellas" and "Wandering Jews."

"Bravo, Mademoiselle," said the old man; "you make astonishing progress; you pronounce better; you have more energy, more sentiment! Another year's lessons, and you will be perfectly capable to make your *débüt* at the Rue Chauterine, where dramatic glory now first dawns."

"Another year!" exclaimed Jenny; ah! that's too long—indeed, I cannot wait. Another year! But why put off my *débüt* to such a period?"

"Take care, my sweet girl. In being too hasty, you might affect your success."

"Have you not told me that I had a charming figure for the stage?"

"Yes, your face and figure are very well; but these are not enough. Beauty, in an actress, is a great deal; but it will never take the place of talent. I could cite to you numerous examples, but I will not; for I do not wish to create any ill feeling with an actress, and, above all, with those who are pretty."

Mademoiselle had great confidence in herself, and began to think that she knew as much as her Professor. At this period old Alexandrin was afflicted with a rheumatic fever, and was forced to keep his bed, instead of going out to give lessons.

A month passed over, and still the old man could not leave his humble abode. But do not think that the time hung heavily on the hands of the little man. Seated in his old arm chair, at one corner of a fire-place that smoked instead of giving heat, old Alexandrin composed verses—was either writing a scene in a play, or a song.

The Muses abandoned him not, but faithfully kept him company, and in their society one never gets tired. If they do not always nourish the body, they, at all events, occupy the mind; and those whom they treat the worst, are, nevertheless, happy, in having something in common with them. They are mistresses who are cruel with us, although we for them make the greatest sacrifices, and whom we cannot leave, because there are charms in the torments which they inflict.

As soon as M. Alexandrin was able to walk, he went to the Rue de la Harpe to see the fair *enlumineuse*.

He longed to see his pupil, whose voice he had not heard since his illness: but he could not blame the young girl with indifference or ingratitude; for, never having thought of giving her his address, she did not know where to go to inquire after him.

M. Alexandrin climbed up to the sixth floor, and knocked at Jenny's door.

It was opened; but, instead of the young girl, a fat man, with an apron on, presented himself, holding in one hand a pair of trowsers, and in the other a needle.

"Who are you wanting?" demanded the fat fellow.

"Who am I wanting? Why, I want to see the young mistress."

"Goodwife, come here a little; an old gentleman wants you. Did you take his measure for a pair of trowsers, or a coat, in my absence? He certainly wants a new suit."

An old woman, with a plump face, came to the door, and, looking at the old man, said,

"I don't know him; I never saw him before. What does he want with me? What is it, sir?"

M. Alexandrin appeared confounded; he looked at the door, then at the stairs, then at the old woman, and muttered,

"Am I not on the sixth floor?"

"You are so, sir; and in the house of M. Witchman, tailor. What can I make for you, sir?"

"I am completely lost. Was not this room, about a month ago, occupied by a young girl, named Jenny?"

"Yes, you are right; just a month since I came here—Witchman, tailor. Do you want a pair of trowsers, a coat, or both?"

"A coat or a pair of trowsers would not hurt me, I grant; but I tell you that it is not a tailor that I want. it is Mademoiselle Jenny, the young picture-colourer."

"You have been told that she left here about fifteen days ago."

"Can you tell me where she has removed to? The young girl had no creditors, and consequently would leave her address."

"That is true; she did leave it. Goodman, what did you do with the young girl's address?"

"How! what? Had I it? Did you give me the address? Oh, yes, I remember, I wrote it upon a card—on the back of the queen of diamonds."

"The queen of diamonds! I gave it yesterday to Toinette to play with; she made a nun of it, then put it in the fire."

"You hear, sir, our daughter made a nun of the address; I am sorry for it; but that need not prevent me from making you a cheap coat."

"No, sir, I don't want anything," said the little man in anger, who muttered to himself, as he descended the stairs,

"When an address is given to any one, it should not be lost, nor given to a child to make a nun of. Where shall I find my pupil now? Paris is so large! Poor young girl! deprived of my lessons, she will make no more progress. What a pity! I was interested in that pretty girl. Cursed tailor! Why did he give the queen of diamonds to his child?"

The old man tried to get intelligence in the neighbourhood, but, in Paris, fifteen days are like fifteen ages. Time soon brings changes and reverses, so that a person that one has not seen for fifteen days, becomes a forgotten being, of whom there is scarcely a single *souvenir* left.

Not being able to find out the young girl, the old writing-master said to himself,

"Well, I will consider that adventure as a pleasing dream, and I will think no more of the young girl. When nothing remains of an adventure, it is always possible to consider it as a dream."

Five months rolled on, and the little old man continued to give writing-lessons for a livelihood, and to compose verses for his amusement.

But his passion for the *belles lettres* did not extinguish his love for flowers, and the violet was still his favourite—a preference which perfectly accorded with his means, as he could thereby the more easily satisfy his desire.

CHAPTER V.

THE INVITATION.

M. Alexandrin, being one day near the Boulevard St. Martin, remembered that it was Monday, and that there was a flower-market in that quarter; wending his way to the Chateau d'Eau, he soon came within sight of myrtles, pinks, and all the flowers of the season; amateurs were walking in the midst of pots and boxes, and the market-women were inviting the passers-by to purchase their fragrant ware.

M. Alexandrin, entering into the flowery walk, followed the crowd, stopped, looked about, and inhaled with delight the perfume of an orange-tree, or the sweet odour of the jessamine.

But, coming back to his only passion, his eyes wandered about in search of a pot of violets; and no sooner did they light on one, than he approached the vendor and began to offer his usual price. When so occupied, a lady, rather coquettishly dressed, stopped at a stall a few steps from him, and asked the price of a moss-rose.

The voice of that lady startled M. Alexandrin. He went up to her, leant his head forward, and, under a fashionable bonnet, discovered the pretty face of Mademoiselle Jenny.

A cry of surprise escaped the old man.

Mademoiselle Jenny turned round, and immediately recognising her old friend, said,

"What! It is you, my dear Professor? Ah! how happy I am to see you again! I thought you were dead!"

"I can certify, my dear Mademoiselle, that I have no desire to die; but I am proud of the chance which makes me find you where I saw you for the first time, in the midst of flowers. Indeed, if I had reflected, it was here I ought to have sought you."

"Always gallant, my dear Professor. But I have a great many things to tell you. Will you accompany me to my home?"

"With pleasure. It is no longer in the Rue de la Harpe, on the sixth floor; for I sought you there in vain. Permit me, then, to be the bearer of your purchase; for I see you have bought that rose."

"What! you wish to be the porter?"

"Yes, that will give me pleasure; for I still pretend to be good for something."

"Well, since you will be so complaisant, take it up, and come with me."

M. Alexandrin took the rose-tree; but on this occasion, the burden was greater than it was on the first; which the little man experienced, as he walked by the side of his pupil.

The rose-tree was large and lovely; and, as the drops of perspiration trickled down the writing-master's face, he could not refrain from reflecting, and saying to himself,

"The devil! From what I see, six months have brought about a very great change. The toilette is no longer the same. Mademoiselle Jenny was formerly dressed as an honest work-girl; now she wears a fashionable hat, a silk gown, a handsome shawl!—lodges on the *third* floor!—and purchases moss-roses. *Hem!* What can have taken place in so short a period as six months? Still, I know that time is not required to bring about material changes in the position of a person, especially when that person is young, well-made, and has fine eyes."

Mademoiselle Jenny stopped before a neat house, in the Boulevard; she entered, followed by Alexandrin. This time the stairs were not, as on the first occasion, dark and slippery, but were lighted up, and well scrubbed.

They arrived, without much fatigue, on the third floor, when the old man was ushered into a small apartment, very handsomely furnished.

"Put the rose-tree upon that stand, and seat yourself in that arm-chair," said Jenny, taking off her bonnet and shawl. "Now, my dear Professor, we shall have a chat together. In the first place, you must be surprised at the change in my position in life; but will you not be more so on ascertaining that I am an actress, and that I perform in one of the neighbouring theatres?"

"Actress! You! How, my dear friend? You have made your appearance, and are engaged?"

"Yes, yes; I am engaged to play the first parts, both in comedy and tragedy."

"Oh, dear! I can scarcely credit it; yet I am so glad."

"I will tell you all. A few days after you gave up calling on me——"

"I had a rheumatic fever," interrupted the old man.

"Poor man! Well, not being able to remain longer as I was, I told one of my friends the desire I had for the stage.

I knew that she was acquainted with a gentleman who also desired to be an actor, and who gave theatrical *soirées* every now and then. She spoke of me to him; introduced me; I took a part, and received the approbation of all present."

"Ah! you have not, then, forgotten my lessons."

"Apparently not, my dear Professor. Well, I played a second time, and I was equally successful; and that evening, a gentleman, who is a journalist, spoke of me to the director of a theatre, who asked me to play a third time, that he might see me. I readily consented, and he also was delighted, for he engaged me immediately, giving me a salary of two thousand five hundred francs. Two thousand five hundred francs! I think that is a pretty sum to begin with; that is better than colouring Blue Beards and Tom Thumbs. I was right to follow the bent of my inclination; to ask you to give me lessons in elocution; and, above all, in refusing the hand of M. Fanfan Benoit. I am so happy, so contented; and, if it were not for the tricks of the dressing-room, the jealousy of the actresses, the mischief of one, and the slanders of others—Oh, but that's nothing; I will soon get accustomed to all. Decidedly, the stage is a charming profession!"

"My dear pupil, I am so pleased, so delighted, that you have succeeded. I must acknowledge that I have a great desire to see you play."

"Oh, you can do so this evening. I am going to appear in a new piece. You must come; I will secure your admission. All that you will require to do is to leave your name at the door, when you will be immediately shown to a seat. Look! there's my theatre; you can see it from here."

"Thank you, thank you; I will not fail to be there this evening."

"And to-morrow morning come and breakfast with me. You will let me know how you were pleased, and tell me all that the audience said of me."

"Certainly, certainly, my dear pupil. I will see you perform this evening, and to-morrow I will come and breakfast with you."

Alexandrin, rubbing his hands with joy, left Jenny; and, enchanted at having discovered his old pupil, and promising himself a treat in the evening, he walked cheerily home to await the happy hour.

CHAPTER VI

THE FAILURE.

The old Professor had no sooner partaken of a frugal dinner, than he repaired to the theatre. The doors were still shut, and there was no one there. It mattered not: the old man, leaning against the door, took a mental glance of the treat in store, and waited in patience and contentment.

At length the doors were opened. He entered, gave his name, and was ushered to a seat near the orchestra. He was the first, and only one in the theatre.

People, however, arrived; and among the persons who seated themselves near him, was one whose face was familiar to the old writing-master. This was a young man, whose dress had nothing fashionable in it; who looked about with an air of astonishment; and who, from time to time, drew from his pocket something which he carried to his mouth, cracked with his teeth, and swallowed by way of distraction.

M. Alexandrin at last recognised him as the son of the grocer, the lover of Jenny, Fanfan Benoit, and he immediately left his seat to place himself beside him, pleased at meeting some one with whom he could speak about his pupil.

"Well, young man, you know who is the leading actress of this theatre, and have, without doubt, come to see her play?"

Young Fanfan looked at the old man for several minutes; then he exclaimed, somewhat audibly,

"Ah! I know you now. It was you I found one morning at Mademoiselle Jenny's, hiding with her under an umbrella."

"Exactly so; it was I. I was her first Professor. It was I who discovered in her the sacred fire—who induced her to take to the stage."

"Ah! you discovered her sacred fire?"

"That is to say, I saw in her innate talent, which always leads to success. What is that you are cracking in that manner, young man?"

"Almonds and dried raisins. They help to pass the time between the acts."

"That's very true. They do amuse, and make the time fly. We are going to see that charming young girl; we will enjoy her triumph, for I am told that she is well liked here. But how long they are of beginning! Give me a few of your dried raisins; they will amuse me also."

"Willingly, sir; put your hand into my left pocket."

The writing-master did not require to be told twice. He plunged his hand in Fanfan's pocket, drew out a handful, and, cracking and swallowing them, he resumed the conversation.

"You loved Mademoiselle Jenny, young man."

"Yes, sir; and it seems to me as if I still love her."

"It seems to you! You are not, then, sure?"

"La, sir! I try not to be sure."

This reply was accompanied by a deep sigh.

M. Alexandrin was affected; but, recovering himself by wiping his face with his handkerchief, he resumed the conversation.

"You wish to forget her! Lovely Jenny! Your raisins are excellent. You would have been glad to have made her your wife?"

"Yes, sir; I foolishly thought that, by doing so, I would be conferring an honour upon her."

"'Foolishly' is a little too severe; but, since the word escaped you, allow me to say that it would have been at least egotism on your part to have prevented that young girl from following the brilliant career which is opened up to her. See, how short a time has changed her position! Look at her abode, her furni——"

"Ah, bah! already. Do you think it's the theatre that has given her furniture?"

M. Alexandrin replied not; he found that, for a grocer, the young man's reflections were insidious enough; and, in order to change the conversation, he plunged his hand again into Fanfan's pocket, crying,

"You were perfectly right in putting these baubles in your pocket, for they are very long in beginning."

"After all," said Fanfan Benoit, heaving a deep sigh, "if it is for the happiness of Mademoiselle Jenny—if she is possessed of great talent—if she is going to make her fortune on the stage—I will certainly say, that she did well in not taking me for her husband; but if, on the contrary——"

"Hush! young man; the curtain rises."

The play began, but Jenny did not perform in the first piece; she did not appear till the second, which was a new one; and the audience, anxious to see the new piece, which was the attraction of the evening, paid very little attention to the first.

M. Alexandrin and his neighbour were also very impatient; but it was the actress that they were desirous of seeing.

At last the new piece began, and Jenny appeared. She personated a farmer's daughter. Her dress became her admirably, and she looked more lovely than ever.

On all sides these words were heard,

"Isn't that actress a fine-looking girl?"

"She doesn't walk well," said others; "she doesn't know how to hold herself."

"Nevertheless, she is a pretty woman."

Fanfan Benoit said nothing; he had scarcely courage to look

at Jenny. As to old Alexandrin, he leaped upon his seat; and, from time to time, he could not help crying out, with a half audible voice,

"Keep your arms down, and throw your head back. Ah! mon Dieu! she does not remember that which I have told her a hundred times; she stretches her neck too far forward, and how badly she turns herself! On the stage, as in the world, it requires great talent to know how to turn oneself."

Jenny got through the first act tolerably; but the new piece was bad, and the actress was not good. Her memory occasionally failed her; and, at times, she mumbled, when wishing to speak with passion.

The audience began to murmur, and ultimately to hiss.

"It is not the actress that they are hissing," said old Alexandrin to his neighbour; "it is the piece."

"Ah! I don't know," replied Fanfan Benoit; "but it appears to me that Mademoiselle Jenny is not exactly at home either."

In fact, Jenny, little accustomed to support the ill humour of the public, became agitated, and ultimately lost herself.

Hisses issued from all parts of the theatre, and the curtain dropped in the midst of a frightful tumult, during which the actress fainted.

M. Alexandrin said no more; the audience rose and left, and Fanfan Benoit went out with the old Professor, and walking with him on the Boulevard, at last broke the silence—

"Is that, sir, what you call success? For my part, I must tell you that I will no longer witness the triumph of Mademoiselle Jenny, for it has made me ill. If there had been only two or three hissers, I would have beaten them till they had shut their mouths; but there were too many; I could not fight them all."

"My dear friend, I again repeat, that it was the piece that they hissed. It was not the fault of poor Jenny that she had a detestable character; she did not make her own part; it is the author who is to blame."

"It's all one, sir; I don't know much about these things; but it appears to me that Mademoiselle Jenny was much embarrassed in saying her part; decidedly, I will never go to the theatre again when she plays. Good evening, sir; I am very sorry that you discovered that Mademoiselle Jenny possessed the sacred fire."

Fanfan Benoit left M. Alexandrin; and the latter went home, saying,

"It is certain that the young girl made her appearance too soon; she undoubtedly requires my lessons, at least for another year."

Next morning the old man did not fail to go to his pupil, when he found Jenny sad and ill. She asked him to sit down

to table, on which was served a breakfast that she did not touch; but whilst the old Professor did honour to it, she overwhelmed him with questions.

"What was said of me last night?"

"They said that the piece was worth nothing."

"But of me?"

"That your dress was very pretty; and, above all, your bonnet. Ah! what a lovely bonnet!"

"But of my acting?"

They said, that after the piece is clipped and paired, that it may succeed.

"But of me, sir? You will not reply to my question."

"Ah! my dear friend, what could you expect them to say of an actress who played in a piece that was hissed down? They pity her, and they pitied you much; and, above all, that poor Fanfan Lenoit; you know that young grocer, that wished to marry you—he of the prunes."

"How? He was at the spectacle?"

"Yes, by my side. He was going to beat the hissers; but there were too many of them."

"Ah! M. Alexandrin, what an evening! I shall never forget it! I could see nothing; I was suffocating. I, who, up to then, had been so favourably received—Ah! I see now, that all is not honey on the stage."

"My dear friend, if all was honey on the stage, the human race would become actors, and there would not be even one left to hiss. Courage, courage, my friend; you must learn to support reverses. Come, between us two, allow me to tell you, that you still require a few lessons; that is indispensable. There are sentiments which you feel correctly, but which you show badly; and on the stage, above all things, we must make ourselves understood."

Mademoiselle Jenny bit her lips; she even knit her brow slightly; then she became impatient, and only listened to old Alexandrin with a distracted air.

At the expiration of a few moments she rose suddenly, saying,

"A thousand pardons, my dear M. Alexandrin. I do not send you away, but I have business of importance this morning. I must go to a rehearsal."

"Is it possible? In that case, I leave you, my dear pupil. Adieu! When do you wish me to call again, to resume our lessons?"

"I don't exactly know; but I have your address now, and shall send for you when I have time."

"Very well; and when passing, I shall call upon you. You will permit me?"

"Certainly. Good-bye, M. Alexandrin."

The young girl bowed to the old man, who returned home rubbing his hands, because he had had a good breakfast, and flattered himself that, in giving lessons to Mademoiselle Jenny, he would receive many such. M. Alexandrin was somewhat of a gourmand, which is a failing common to poets.

Eight days elapsed. The old Professor daily expected that Mademoiselle Jenny would send for him, to resume his professional duties; but not hearing from her, he made up his mind to call at her house.

He asked the servant for Mademoiselle Jenny Desgrillon. The servant looked at him attentively; then said that she was not at home.

"I shall return another day; but have the goodness to tell her that M. Alexandrin called, and that he is anxious to hear from her. You understand—anxious."

The servant scarcely deigned to reply. These people have a habit of being rude to those who wear threadbare coats.

M. Alexandria left, in saying, "I am certain that she will send for me to-morrow;" but the next day passed as the preceding ones.

The old author returned several times to the house in which his old friend resided, and received the servant's customary answer—

"Madame has gone out;" or, "Madame is not to be seen."

Old Alexandrin was not devoid of pride; so, one day, he said to the servant in indignation,

"Mademoiselle Jenny ought always to be visible to me, her Professor—to me, who directed her first dramatical studies, and who would have made of that young person a Mars, or a Georges, if she had listened to me. Therefore, tell Mademoiselle Jenny that I shall call on her no more; if she desires to see me, she knows my address. She can come to my house; no one is compromised by calling on me."

For an answer the servant shut the gate in the old man's face. The old author returned home this time without rubbing his hands; but he muttered on the way,

"Oh, women! women! Cato sustained that wisdom and reason were incompatible with your minds; and Catullus asserts that the oaths of the fair are engraven on the breath of the wind, and on the surface of the waves. Henceforth I shall be of the opinion of Catullus and Cato. I ought also to bring to my recollection that line of Virgil, which I have often repeated,

"Varium et mutabile varium fœmina."

"We learn those things by heart, but it is the heart that soon forgets them."

Weeks and months rolled on, and M. Alexandrin heard no

more of Mademoiselle Jenny. Faithful to the resolve he had made, he did not return to Jenny's house. Still, at the bottom of his heart, he entertained a feeling of interest for that young girl. Whenever he went out, his first act was to look at the theatre-bills. He pored over those belonging to the theatre in which Jenny had been engaged, and endeavoured in vain to find the name of her whom he once termed his pupil; but that of Jenny Desgrillon was never amongst those of the other actresses.

"It is very strange," said the old man; "she very seldom plays; perhaps she has gone to another theatre."

And the old Professor sought each theatre-bill, and carefully looked over the names; but Jenny Desgrillon was not in any.

"She has probably changed her name to some one more striking. Perhaps she thought her own was too simple. Poor little thing! It is not the name that creates talent—it is talent that renders the name illustrious. She ought to have remembered, however, that 'Jenny' brought happiness to the theatre, and that two actresses of that name acquired celebrity, and fully gained the approbation of a judicious public."

CHAPTER VII.

THE RENCONTRE.

Six months passed away. M. Alexandrin sometimes thought of pretty Jenny, of the Rue de la Harpe, whom he preferred to her of the Boulevard St. Martin; but he did not go so often to read the play-bills.

One day, when the weather was fine, the old writing-master, after having given several lessons in hair and bold strokes, extended his walk along the Boulevards as far as the Madeleine, in front of the flower-market.

He admired this pretty promenade, long and balmy, and sheltered from the incursions of carriages: but he was surprised to see so few people in the market. True, there are fewer flowers there than on the Quay, but it is not so badly supplied that one cannot find something to embellish a fruit-basket, or renew a *jardinière*.

M. Alexandrin walked about the market for a considerable time, and after admiring some shrubs, he, as he was wont, looked out for a pot of violets. But at the Madeleine market common flowers are rare, and the old Professor had not found what he was looking for, when an elegant calash drew up, and a young lady, exquisitely dressed, alighted.

This young lady, whose features were partly concealed by a

leghorn bonnet, stopped from time to time before the stalls, but she seemed to find nothing sufficiently beautiful on which she could fix her choice. At length a superb camelia attracted her attention, and she approached to ask the price of it. Old Alexandrin was at this time standing beside the camelia, behind which he fancied he saw a pot of violets. Suddenly a well-known voice struck his ear; he turned round, looked at the lady, and then uttered a cry of surprise. In her he recognised Jenny Desgrillon!

The young lady also recognised the old man; and, smiling, she held out her hand, saying, "It appears that we are to meet each other in all the flower-markets of Paris."

"Yes, it might be thought that such is written in our destiny."

"I'll wager, my dear Professor, that you came here to purchase your pot of violets," said Jenny, smiling.

"I was, indeed, looking for one, for I am constant; but you are different; this superb camelia is now the object of your attention. I can no longer dispute the flower of your choice, for our purchases are no longer the same. But I see it is with you, as with Nicolet."

"My good Alexandrin, I am certain that you are angry with me, and I acknowledge that you have cause for being so, and at which I am now sorry. Will you forgive me?"

"It is impossible to retain resentment against a pretty woman. Permit me to carry your camelia; you know that such is my office."

"I consent, on condition that you accompany me home in my carriage."

The old man replied not, but took up the camelia, which was in a box. It was rather heavy for a man of M. Alexandrin's age, but self-esteem doubled his strength; besides, he was proud of still being the porter of Mademoiselle Jenny.

Fortunately, the calash was close at hand. The young lady leaped into it, but the old man hesitated. Jenny held out her hand, the footman took hold of the camelia, and the poor Professor got in; but he hardly knew where he was, on feeling himself rolling along in a splendid carriage, and seated in front of a lady who wore feathers, and silks, and cachmeres.

They soon arrived in front of a beautiful house in the Rue d'Antin; the calash entered the court. The camelia was this time carried by a lacquey, for which M. Alexandrin was not at all sorry; and the old man followed Jenny, who, on reaching the first floor, ushered him into a splendid apartment. After crossing a richly-furnished saloon, they reached a boudoir, hung with silk and cachmere. Jenny motioned to the old man to sit down beside her, on a divan: and he, admiring everything around him, sat only on the edge, murmuring, "Oh, how mag-

nificent! how superb! What theatre do you belong to now, my dear Jenny?"

"I am no longer called Jenny. My name is now Madame de St. Eugene; that now suits me better."

"Madame de St. Eugene! Oh! that is, indeed, more sounding."

"Besides, I am no longer an actress—no longer at any theatre. I have renounced a career in which, to gain success, we are obliged to sustain a thousand *ennuis*, a thousand vexations—being the buts of illiberal criticism, and petty jealousies. Do you remember, my dear Professor, the first representation of an unsuccessful piece, in which I played?"

"Yes, perfectly; I was seated beside M. Fanfan Benoit, the worthy grocer."

"The following day, when you came to see me, you would not tell me positively that I played my part badly. but you gave me to understand that I had much to learn. Instead of acknowledging the justice of what you said, I felt offended—my self-love was wounded, and I ordered the servant to tell you, whenever you called, that I was from home."

"On my eleventh visit, I suspected as much."

"Pardon me, my good Alexandrin; flattery had turned my head. I thought I possessed great talent, when I had none; for I made a second attempt, and was again hissed. Oh! I was then in despair! I know not where it might have led me; but at that time I received a visit from a gentleman, as respectable as he was rich: he had seen me play, and found me so pretty, that he placed his heart and his fortune, a carriage and cashmeres, at my feet, on condition that I quitted the stage. *Ma foi!* the moment was too well chosen for me to think of refusing; for I then detested the theatre, in proportion to my admiration of cashmeres. I accepted the gentleman's proposition; and, since that time, have occupied this apartment. I have servants and a carriage at my disposal, and I cannot form a wish that is not instantly gratified."

Alexandrin, whose countenance assumed a singular expression while he listened to the lady, shook his head, and replied, "But since you are so happy, it is astonishing how you have changed; you have no longer that freshness, that look of health, which embellished your pretty face, when you lived on the sixth floor in the Rue de la Harpe; you are pale now, your face has lost its roundness, and the vivacity of your eyes are gone. Pardon me, perhaps I shall offend you again—but I am only telling you that which strikes me."

"Oh! that is nothing. I now go so often to balls and *soirées*, where I pass whole nights, which fatigues me: but what matters? It is fashionable to be pale; and, as such, I am thought charming."

"And your husband, M. de St. Eugene, what does he do?" resumed Alexandrin, with marked emphasis; will you not introduce me to him?"

Jenny smiled, and said,

"When M. de St. Eugene is here, I receive no one; but he never arrives before four o'clock; therefore, my dear Alexandrin, you must come and see me in the mornings, when you will breakfast with me, and I will treat you to the nicest delicacies, for I remember you are rather fond of good things."

The old man rose, took up his hat, which he had placed on the floor, and, bowing to the lady, said, in a grave tone,

"Madame de St. Eugene, I have the honour to wish you good day."

"Are you going to leave me already, my dear Professor?"

"Yes, Madame de St. Eugene; I have several writing-lessons to give. Ah! I ought to have confined myself to them, and never have given any other lessons."

"But, at least, you will come and see me again soon. You will always find me here, I promise you, provided you come before four o'clock."

"That will do, Madame de St. Eugene; I shall remember. Do not put yourself to any inconvenience, I pray you, Madame de St. Eugene."

The old man hastily left the splendid apartment occupied by the beautiful Jenny, saying to himself,

"Oh, no; that will not suit me. The young girl is now following a path which I like not. She has left the stage, for which I fancied she had a decided predilection; but it turns out that her inclination was for plumed bonnets and cachmeres. No, I shall not visit her again; I will go no more to see her. I am a gourmand, very likely; I will not deny it; nevertheless, I shall never commit an act of baseness; I must no longer seek the society of Mademoiselle Jenny, now that she has changed her name to Madame de St. Eugene, and has a husband that cannot be seen, and who does not go home to her till four o'clock."

The old man crossed the yard, and was about to leave the house of Jenny, when a grocer, with a basket full of confectionary, ran up against him.

"Take care, take care, man!" exclaimed Alexandrin; but at the same moment he stopped, and seized the arm of the grocer, crying, "If I am not mistaken, you are M. Fanfan Benoit?"

"Yes," replied the young grocer; "and I think I remember you—you are the professor, the author, the——"

"Ah! my dear friend, I have almost renounced all that; the mind cools with age. But where are you going?"

"To take these goods to this house."

"You take goods to this house?"

"Yes, sir."

"To whom?"

"To ———. Siop a moment; I was told the name. Oh! to Madame de St. Eugene. She must be a person of quality, for she orders the best sugar and coffee."

"You are going to Madame de St. Eugene!" said Alexandrin, still holding the grocer; "I am, my dear friend, going to tell you something in confidence. Do you know who the lady is that you are going to?"

"No, not I; but as she pays ready money, it is of no consequence to me."

"You will not be so indifferent when I tell you, that the lady, who lodges on the first floor, in a magnificent apartment, and who wears cachmeres, keeps her carriage, and now buys camelias, is no other than Jenny Desgrillon, the *ci-devant* colquer of prints in the Rue de la Harpe, whom you intended to marry!"

"Jenny!" cried Fanfan Benoit, putting down his basket. "Jenny! What! she has become a lady, and has made her fortune in so short a time? I see now, M. Alexandrin, that you were right in saying she was possessed of genius, and that it was better for her to be an actress, than the wife of a grocer; for I would never have been able to have provided her with servants, and a carriage. She is greatly indebted to you; but, to get so much money, she must, at least, be at the Opera."

"No, she is not at the Opera!" replied the old man, with a sigh, as he looked into the basket (but all the parcels were tied up); "she is not at the Opera; she has left the stage."

"Left the stage! and has made her fortune! A rich man, then, must have married her; for she is married, since she bears the name of Madame de St. Eugene. What is her husband? He must be a peer of France?"

"Her husband! him! I do not believe she has a husband who is a peer of France, or even a dealer in rabbit-skins! I believe——*Hem!* My dear friend, women—you know. Virgil has said,

'Varium et mutabile semper fœmina!'

and, if we add the opinions of Catullus and Cato, we will not obtain a result very favourable to the fair sex."

"Sir," said Fanfan Benoit, taking up his basket, "I do not understand Latin, but I guess what you mean. Ah, Jenny! has it come to this? Was it for this you refused to become my wife? If, however, you are happy, so much the better; I hope your fortune may last; but it is not I who will supply you with sugar and coffee; no, no; you must send elsewhere! Adieu, Monsieur."

In uttering these words, the young grocer strode hurriedly away. Alexandrin looked after him, saying to himself,

"He is an honest fellow, that grocer! Yes, he is; in his place I would have done the same—I would have taken back my goods; only, since he did not take the coffee to Madame de St. Eugene, he might have offered me a few ounces; no matter, M. Fanfan Benoit is a person of spirit; a man ought not to supply a woman with sugar who has treated him with disdain."

The old Professor now returned home, determined not to visit the Chaussée d'Antin again, nor go any more in search of flowers, to the market of the Madeleine.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FUNERAL.

Time passes on—it waits on no one; it flies with the rich, as well as with the poor. Time is the perpetual motion.

The little old man still cultivated the Muses—the culture of which was not very profitable; but now, he had no one with whom he could talk of the theatres—to whom he could divulge his plans, and elucidate his plots; and his mind often reverted to Jenny, who used to listen to him so complacently, when she lived on the sixth floor.

"I am certain she would still listen to me with pleasure!" said Alexandrin to himself; "for I must acknowledge that she was very friendly the last time I saw her, and that her fortune made no alteration in her conduct towards me; but, no! I cannot go to see her; her society is no longer fit for me."

In saying this, the old Professor still thought of her who had been his pupil. At his age, man is not inconstant in his affections—a new passion does not suddenly chase away an old one. The old man did his utmost to remain firm in his resolution not to visit Jenny, but every day his resolve became weaker and weaker, and even good reasons for breaking it started up in his mind. The old man would sometimes say,

"I am persuaded that I am treating this young girl rather harshly; she showed me much kindness the last time I saw her; she made me get into her carriage at the flower-market of the Madeleine, and then, too, she frankly acknowledged her errors! which is a thing we don't often meet with; besides, is there nothing with which I can reproach myself? If she has turned out badly, and abandoned her occupation, am I not

somewhat to blame? Did I not first flatter her inclination for the stage? Ah! it was very wrong of me, then; and should I now forget her, and trouble myself no more about her? No, no. That I do not keep the society of Madame de St. Eugene is perfectly right; but not to go, even once, to inquire after the health of kind Jenny, is ungrateful, shows a bad heart; especially as the last time I saw her she looked so thin and altered. I shall decidedly pay her a visit, to know how she is; that cannot compromise me."

One morning, M. Alexandrin brushed up, as well as he could, his old hat and coat, and started off to the Rue d'Antin. Six months had elapsed since he had seen Jenny.

When the old man arrived at the Rue d'Antin, he did not know the number of Madame de St. Eugene's abode, but he was certain he could recognise the house. He examined every door attentively as he walked along; and when he came to the house, which seemed to him like the one he was looking for, he perceived a hearse standing at the door, which was hung in black.

In passing before this lugubrious spectacle, he respectfully took off his hat, but still pursued his way, seeking for the house of Jenny. He could not find it; he must have passed it, without recognising it. He retraced his steps, and again came up to the hearse, the sight of which produced in him a painful impression. He passed quickly by, still searching for the house of his pupil, without being able to find it. In again retracing his steps, the old Professor found himself close to the house hung in mourning; he was persuaded that the house of Jenny must be on that side, and an idea started in his mind.

"The house that I cannot find, must it not be the one, the door of which is covered with black?"

This thought was painful to him; he banished it; he would not have it that this was the house, and yet, the more he looked at the adjoining houses, the more convinced was he that this was the place he had stopped at on his first visit. He then approached the symbols of mourning, saying to himself,

"After all, what is there astonishing in some one being dead in the house in which my old pupil lives? At Paris, so many people lodge under the same roof, that one dies on the second floor, another is married on the first, and a child is born on the third. Such things often occur."

He entered the gateway, where the coffin lay, still exposed. The old man bent his head, and placed his hand on his heart. The sight of the coffin was painful to him. He then went to the *concierge*, and said, in a faltering voice,

"Madame, I have not made a mistake; does not a young lady live here, who is called Madame de St. Eugene?"

The *concierge* looked at the old man before she replied, and then said, hesitatingly,

"Yes, sir, that lady did live here."

"Has she left? Without doubt, you know her address?"

The woman fixed her eyes on the old man; then said,

"Perhaps, sir, you are a relation of Madame de St. Eugene's?"

"I am only her friend; but I am much interested in her. Why do you ask this question, Madame?"

"Ah, sir! It is, that I may tell you the truth. The person you seek no longer occupies the first floor; she is—she is there!"

And the *concierge* pointed to the bier in the gateway.

"Can it be possible?" cried the old Professor, carrying his handkerchief to his eyes. "What! kind Jenny!—so pretty, and so young!"

"Alas, sir! she died yesterday. For some time back she had a cold, which she neglected; but she would take no care of herself; she went to balls, for she did not like to stop at home; she wished always to be out. However, about a month ago she took to her bed, and she never again rose from it!"

"Poor Jenny! poor young girl!" murmured the old man, shedding tears. "Ah! I had a presentiment of this! The sight of the hearse made me shudder. I will at least pay her a last tribute of respect; for, of all those who led her to balls, where she lost her health, few, perhaps, will come to do so."

The body was put into the hearse. M. Alexandrin followed, looking round him for those that were to accompany him; but they were not to be seen. No one followed the hearse of Jenny Desgrillon, except the old man. He was the only one who shed tears for her who once had a crowd of admirers! They arrived at the church. A marriage was being celebrated in the chapel adjoining the one in which prayers were said for Jenny—it was that of M. Fanfan Benoit, the grocer, who had married a young girl that did not dislike his profession.

M. Alexandrin perceived the new-married couple, who were leaving the chapel, and were about to pass by him. The old Professor threw himself on his knees, and concealed his face in his hat, for fear the grocer should recognise him, and might guess who the person was for whom they were celebrating the service of the dead. He did not wish that the news of Jenny's death should reach the young grocer on the day of his marriage, for he thought it might disturb his happiness. The old man followed Jenny to her last abode. A piece of ground had been purchased for her in the cemetery; her tomb was surrounded with a small railing, and there was a small spot left to plant flowers on. The old man returned on the following day with a

small pot of violets, which he placed on the young girl's tomb, saying,

"Poor Jenny! This was the flower which caused us to become acquainted! Henceforth, whenever I purchase one, it shall be, to come and deposit it here!"

THE END.

H U S B A N D S .

H U S B A N D S.

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS.

BEAUMARCHAIS says, "Of all serious things, marriage is certainly the most ridiculous!"

But Beaumarchais, who was constantly railing, often uttered paradoxes, which he could only sustain by jests.

No ; marriage is not buffoonery. That is certain. The married state is, perhaps, not always so comfortable as might be imagined. It is not enough to find slippers and attentions: and does the married man always find these attentions? Certain husbands require so much to make them happy, while others require very little—but that little is sometimes as difficult to be obtained as the larger quantity.

Still, every one marries; for those who are not yet married, will be so soon. Married! why, a matter of course. But, please God, it is not our intention to make this a satirical dissertation against Hymen.

Since the majority of mankind taste of marriage, probably— notwithstanding all the jocular darts directed against marriage and husbands in that knot which unites two persons for life—the advantages, the enjoyments, overcome the *ennuis* and inconveniences.

And then, what would become of us, if it was not for marriage?

Are we not fulfilling our end on earth by living sociably?

Are we not here to love, above all things?

"We must love; it is love that us sustains:
For, without love, sad is the lot of man.
Night comes; we must tell all we feel
To the tender object that our heart adores;
To wake, and then again to tell as much;
To sleep again, and dream on't still."

It is Voltaire who says that; and I am quite of Voltaire's opinion.

Well, since night brings about all those sweet things, it is indispensable to have near us the tender object that our heart adores.

Besides, it is also the doctrine of the Apostles—

“Melius est nubere quàm uri.”

So, then, it is understood that one does perfectly right in marrying.

But then, you married men—why is it that you have something about you—an air peculiar to yourselves?

Why do you so often deny your real state, by assuming the gait, and borrowing the attractions and manners, of the frolicsome unmarried man?

Why, when scarcely married, do you repent of your act? Why do you so soon cease to be lovers, to be gallant, to be amiable? for there are innumerable things which you cease to do, or which you do not do so well. Why, instead of avoiding quarrels, by a little patience and complacency, do you accustom yourself to dispute with your wife as regularly as taking your coffee? Why, when *ennui* introduces itself into your household, do you go to seek pleasures elsewhere, instead of endeavouring to take them to your own home? Why is it that you are the first to do all that is required to extinguish the love that your wife has for you? Why are you foolish enough to associate with young men and parties, between you and whom, a comparison is not admissible? Why do you go everywhere and foolishly declare that your wife does not love you? You might as well tell them,

“The place is vacant; I occupy it no longer; you can present yourself.”

“Wherefore! wherefore!” I will wager that you have already said—“we do nothing of all that.”

Ah! you do nothing of all that! you are sure of it. But there is a difficulty in knowing oneself.

Do you wish to know what you do?

Be assured that I will not overstretch the picture.

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW-MARRIED MAN; OR, IF YOU LIKE IT BETTER, THE HONEY-MOON.

During the honey-moon the new-married man rises late, and it is with much difficulty that he can be got out of bed; (it is understood that his wife is still by his side).

If he is in the employ of any person, he says, "Ah! I'm sure it is now too late to go to the office to sign the entry-sheet; in fact, I should like as well not to go at all to-day."

If engaged in commerce, he says, "The clerks are down stairs—they don't require me to open the shop for them. Very little business is done in the mornings; besides, these young men must learn to do without me—I can't be always at their elbows looking after them."

If in state affairs, he says, "I have an appointment this morning, but the evening will do as well. After all, a person must not kill himself."

If a landed proprietor, and his wife asks him what o'clock it is, he answers her with a kiss; then says, "What is it to us? Can't we do as we please?"

With these and other reasons, accompanied by tender caresses, Madame is easily contented, and is pleased to find that her husband is gifted with an all-persuasive eloquence.

Love, however, does not support our frail machine; on the contrary, the pleasures of Cytherus whets the appetite—

"Sine Cereret Baccho friget Venus."

Our husband shortly acknowledges that he is very hungry. The wife replies, "Breakfast, no doubt, is waiting for us—let us rise."

"Why should we get up?" says the husband, in clasping his loved spouse in his arms; "let us breakfast in bed, my dear; that will be more agreeable."

They breakfast in bed. It may be pleasant to do so; but one thing is sure, it cannot be very convenient. No matter; love finds in it many charms.

After breakfast, they do not even then get up; they have got a thousand pleasant things to say to each other.

At length they rise; and, in dressing, amuse themselves by kissing, pinching, tickling, and many other little tricks, which no doubt are very amusing.

The dinner hour arrives, and they have done nothing but laughed, toyed, and prattled. The husband finds that the day has passed very rapidly; and the languishing eyes of Madame express the same.

Monsieur cannot leave off fixing his eyes on those of his *chère épouse*, nor from putting his arms gently round her waist, then fondly kissing her.

The wife becomes fearful of his excess of love, and is afraid that her husband may lose his reason from its effects.

At dinner the husband takes Madame upon his knee; drinks out of her glass; eats from what she tastes; and all is insipid that she does not touch.

In the evening, if the new-married couple make up their

minds to go to the *Spectacle*, they never remain till it is over; if to a party, the husband is anxious to get home. He makes signs to his wife; she tries to convince him that, for the sake of decorum, they must stay a little longer. But the husband braves appearances; it matters little to him what people think or say; he is desirous to take his wife away, and longs to find himself *tete-à-tete* with her; such moments appear to him to be too rare.

At last, he succeeds in forcing his beloved spouse away; in fact, he almost carries her off.

He puts Madame into a coach, and precipitates himself after her. How impatient he is! If he would always remain so, how truly charming it would be; but—but——

CHAPTER III.

LA LUNE ROUSSE.

Would the wife be always the same to her husband as she was during the honey-moon? That is a serious question; nor will I endeavour to answer it here, because it is married men that now engage my attention—not their cherished halves. But I will make one remark, *en passant*—that women do not grow weary of real pleasure and happiness so soon as men; and, consequently, it is not the wife that begins to change the bliss of the honey-moon.

The husband, who so much liked to remain late in bed, begins to rise a little sooner; then gets up as before marriage; then earlier.

It is now the wife who endeavours to keep him in bed, by clasping him in her arms; but our husband disengages himself by saying,

“It is time to go to the office; in fact, I have no great desire that an unfavourable account should be given of me to my employers, and therefore cause me to lose my situation.”

Or, “The clerks below do nothing when I am not there; and to be in commerce, it is absolutely necessary to rise in the morning, without which nothing would go on well. What is there like the eye of a master, my dear?”

Or, “I have a very early appointment this morning, and it is upon a most important affair, therefore must not fail to keep it. Besides, when a man is engaged in matters of importance, he must not be a sluggard.”

“But you have not breakfasted,” says Madame, heaving a

sigh; "if you like, it shall be brought to you in bed. That will not detain you much longer."

"Oh, no; *par exemple!* Breakfast in bed! How very inconvenient! We would spill our coffee about us, let our spoons fall, then lose our bread in picking them up. How wretched it must be to breakfast in bed! It is like the people who, when dining upon the grass, put their backs out of joint in order to pour themselves out a glass of something to drink. A table, my dear, a well-served table, is what is requisite for ease and comfort."

Madame pouts; she says with a discontented air, "Formerly, you liked very much to breakfast in bed with me, and did not then find out the bad effects of doing so."

Instead of an answer, the husband jumps up, dresses himself, takes a hurried breakfast, and goes out before his wife has finished her morning toilette. When he returns home, if his wife goes near him, and begins to fondle, to laugh, and play those little tricks which were so pleasant during the first few days of marriage, our married man says hastily, "Let me alone, my dear; I have no time for this nonsense. Oh, yes, you are very agreeable; but if you wish to confer upon me a favour, go away—you hinder me very much."

The husband no longer takes his spouse by the waist, nor does he press her hand, or gaze for minutes contemplating her beauty. At dinner, he no more takes her upon his knee; and when she eats from a certain dish, and presents a part to him, he pretends not to see it, but continues eating what he had; or he will shrug his shoulders, and reply, "Have done with your foolishness. You know I don't like that;" otherwise, "It is too fat;" or, "It is too lean."

When Madame puts on a new bonnet, and playfully comes to Monsieur and asks, "How do I look, my dear? Does it become me?" Our husband replies, "Oh, very well—very well—you are charming;" but he has not even cast his eyes upon his wife.

The latter, perceiving that he has not looked at her, goes away much hurt at his indifference, muttering that, for the future, she would not give herself much trouble in trying to please his taste.

When our gentleman takes his wife to a *soirée*, he leaves her in a corner of the room, where she must amuse herself as she best can. As for him, he does not remain with her, but becomes the gallant of another lady—ay, even of many other ladies; the great essential is, that she be not his own. Should he dance, it will never be with his wife: that would be exceedingly vulgar. Afterwards he sits down to the gaming-table, and forgets the hour; he amuses himself, but never thinks of the probability of his wife being tired. She at last approaches

the table, then goes to her husband, and says, with a soft-toned voice, "My dear, are you not thinking of going home?"

"Yes, yes, immediately—very soon; go and dance a little, and then we shall go away."

"I cannot dance any longer, I am so fatigued."

"Ah, well, go and repose yourself."

The wife retires in silence, but comes back in about half an hour to her husband, who is still playing.

"My dear, it is getting very late—are you coming?"

"Yes, yes—in five minutes; I will be with you immediately."

The five minutes last another half hour; at length, our married man leaves the table, saying, "How vexatious it is not to be able to do what one likes—to have somebody everlastingly at your elbow, who forces you to leave when you desire to remain. Women have got no discretion. Ah! when I was a bachelor I did whatever I liked. Fools that we are to enchain ourselves!"

At last, Monsieur takes the arm of Madame; they pursue their way on foot; and when she says, "Are we not going to take a coach?" He replies, "For what purpose? it is not far; besides, a short walk will do you good." The poor wife again sighs; she finds that her husband has changed very much. But is it possible that the extravagant passion which characterises the honey-moon could last for ever? Oh, no, no, without doubt.

But why is it that husbands, after marriage, begin a system that would be difficult—nay, perhaps, impossible—to continue? Why do they waste all their affection at first, and never afterwards find a soft word for those whom they formerly so much loved?

CHAPTER IV.

THE HUSBAND WHO LOVES HIS CHILDREN.

You are married, and have children. It is well. Scripture saith, "Increase and multiply." Indeed, when you are married, you no longer increase, but you multiply. There are, however, some households which do not multiply. In this case, if the husband wishes for children, he blames his wife for not having them, and speaks to her on this subject jeeringly, and often in language both harsh and unbecoming.

Poor woman! As if she was not already sorry enough at not being a mother! And besides, what proof have you, that it is your wife who cannot have children? Why, may it not be your fault, instead of her's?

You have consulted the faculty!

But doctors are not infallible; they are liable to errors, like other men. *Errare humanum est.*

In fine, take my advice: if your wife does not become a mother, do not reproach her so often on this subject, for that might give her the idea of assuring herself whether the fault is your's or her's.

But, we are speaking of a husband who has children, and who adores them—who is devoted to them, body and soul—who stands in rapture by their cradle—who gives them their food, after he has tasted it—who gets up in the night to give them drink, and who in the day-time takes them to the Boulevards, or elsewhere.

Let us take a walk on the Boulevards. We will not be long before we meet a husband who is fond of his children. It is impossible not to recognise, at the first glance, this type of paternal love, who has renounced all the other privileges of man, to devote himself entirely to his little ones.

Do you see that man, whose modest apparel is devoid of the slightest affectation? He would be very well, if his children were not in the habit of wiping their hands on his clothes—on his coat, his trowsers, indeed on the first thing that they can seize about his person. But as his clothes are always bedaubed with sweetmeats, honey, treacle, or butter, you will allow that it is difficult for him to preserve a neat and clean appearance. His coat has often a tear in some part of it; it is rare that several of the buttons are not wanting, and that indentations have not been made in his hat. All this is the effect of his children's pranks, and yet it does not prevent him from humming a playful tune—

“Ah! what happiness it is to be a father!”

He has two sons, and his wife is a third time *enceinte*. His eldest son is six years old, and his youngest four. From morning till night he is waiting on his two little boys. His wife will not have Dodolphe and Polyte thwarted in any way; she pretends that, to form the characters of the two children, he must always satisfy their wishes.

Monsieur is too good a father to oppose his wife; and, instead of making his children obey him, he is constantly obeying them. When Dodolphe and Polyte wish to go for a walk, he hastens to put on his hat and surtout, and he is off in a twinkling with his sons. His wife cries after him, from the top of the staircase,

“Take care of the coaches; don't let them walk too fast; take care that they don't walk in the mud! If they tear their clothes, remember, I'll blame you.”

To all these instructions, he replies submissively,

"Don't fear, my dear; I'll not leave them for a moment; I'll attend to them; don't be uneasy."

The husband goes in the direction of the Boulevards, holding Polyde by one hand, and Dodolphe by the other. At first the children go along pretty peaceably; and, pleased at being out, they content themselves by looking about them, and making their father stop at every shop-window, which he does with admirable complaisance; but when they have reached the Boulevard of the Temple, Dodolphe wishes to go to the right to look at the wax figures, while Polyte wants to turn to the left to see the Chateau d'Eau. Feeling himself pulled in different directions, our married man, who is fond of children, feels sorely perplexed; for the first time in his life, he cannot satisfy both his sons at once; but he does what he can to make them agree, in saying to them,

"We cannot, my children, go both ways at once; if we could, I should certainly ask nothing better; you know I am not in the habit of opposing you."

"I want to see the wax figures," said the eldest.

"I want to go to the Chateau *dodo, dodo*," cried the youngest; who, being passionate, began to stamp, like a person of consequence.

This excites the admiration of his father.

"No, we'll go that way; won't we, papa?"

"No; this way."

The two boys again pull at their indulgent father, each of them holding by a skirt of his coat. He is deeply affected; but, perceiving that if he does not restore order, he'll very soon be reduced to his waistcoat, he summons up resolution, and cries, in a stern voice,

"If you don't be quiet, I'll go away and leave you both! Then the guard will come and take you! You'll be arrested as bad boys; and serve you right, too."

This threat produces its effect, and the children are quiet for a moment.

Delighted at being obeyed, the father leads them on with an air of pride, and looks round him to enjoy the effect which he must have produced on the passers-by.

They go to place themselves in front of the wax figures; but this does not satisfy the two boys, who want to go inside to see the exhibition.

The father consents, and they enter. (This is the fifteenth time this respectable man has seen this exhibition, and listened to the explanations given of it.)

After having seen the figures of Curtius, the children are thirsty. The father takes them to a *café*, and calls for some beer. When it is brought, the little fellow tastes it, makes wry faces, and spits it out, saying, "Oh, now nasty it is! it isn't

sweet!" The father calls for lemonade, and sugar and water, which he gives to his sons; and although he is not thirsty, he drinks the beer, that it may not be wasted. Paternal love, indeed, overcomes everything.

On leaving the *café*, the children want to see Punch. This time the boys do not ask to go inside; they have already discovered that the most amusing part of the exhibition takes place outside. But, as they cannot see, on account of the crowd before them, who are also anxious to witness Punch, they cry out, "Papa, lift me up." Our married man stoops down and takes a son in each arm, raises them on his shoulders, and, in this position, he finds his nose close to the seats of his sons' trowsers, who have not yet learnt to restrain themselves in society. All in the paternal condition is not honey. This dear man, who now sees nothing but the seats of his sons' breeches, is, nevertheless, obliged to explain the performance to them, and reply to the questions they are incessantly asking.

"Papa, who is that ugly man that shakes his head, and wants to beat Punch?"

"It is the commissary, my son."

"Look! he has two large horns in his head, and he has a red tail."

"If he has a red tail, it is not the commissary; it is the devil, my children."

"Papa, what does the devil want to beat Punch for?"

"Perhaps, my child, because Punch has been misbehaving; he has refused to eat his soup, and would not learn by heart the fable of the fox and the raven."

"Papa, does the devil teach Punch fables? He is, then, his schoolmaster?"

The papa, astonished at the profundity of Dodolphe's remarks, who is only six years old, casts his eyes on the bystanders, to read in their countenances the same admiration which he at that moment feels for his son; but, perceiving that no one takes any notice of him, he determines to reply aloud, in order to attract attention.

"My dear Dodolphe, the devil is not a schoolmaster; it would certainly be wrong to attribute to him those functions—those functions!—as much more—those functions!"

Here the papa, who has great difficulty in finding what he wishes to say, begins to cough, as if he had swallowed a fish-bone. After which he resumes—

"But from time immemorial the devil has punished little blackguards. This is what I wanted to make you understand just now, in employing a metaphorical figure. *Hem! hem!*"

"Papa, who is that man in the great black robe, with flour on his hair, who comes as the devil is going away, and who quarrels with Punch?"

"Oh! this time, my son, it is the commissary."

"What is a commissary, papa?"

"It is, my son, a man who has to restore peace and order."

"Why does he fight with Punch?"

New marks of admiration from the father, who begins to suspect he has on his shoulders a little Voltaire. At length he replies,

"Perhaps, my son, Punch has refused to pay his rates, or has placed flower-pots outside his windows, in spite of the orders of the police."

"Ah! ah! the commissary has killed Punch."

"This, my son, is a proof of Divine justice, which ordains that, sooner or later, evil-doers shall receive the punishment their misconduct merits."

"Ah! no; Punch gets up again, and he kills the commissary."

"It is, probably, because the commissary has two weights and two measures, that Providence has chastised him, through the agency of Punch."

"Papa! papa! the commissary is not dead; he takes up his stick again, and kills Punch!"

"Then, my son, it is decidedly Punch who is the wretch."

"Papa! papa! Punch is not dead; there, he takes hold of his stick again, and kills the commissary. Oh! how he is beating him."

The papa begins to find it rather difficult to explain the moral of the piece to his children; but he is seized at this moment with a fit of sneezing, which relieves him from this embarrassment, and throws him into another; for, when we sneeze, we generally want to wipe our nose; this is especially the case with persons that take snuff. Our man, after having sneezed, would give anything to be able to take his handkerchief out of his pocket, but how could he with a boy on each arm? The papa decides on not blowing his nose! This is the only decision he can come to, in the position he is in.

A dispute soon arises on the shoulders of the married man. Dodolphe and Polyte are trying to snatch from each other's hand a stick of barley-sugar. The quarrel is accompanied by cries and blows. In vain the father says to them,

"Well, have you finished up there? Am I holding you on my shoulders for you to fight?"

"He has taken my sugar-stick!"

"It is he that is greedy! He is eating it all!"

"Don't believe him, papa! I have broken it in two, and have given him the half of it!"

"Papa! he has kept the biggest!"

"It isn't true; he says that, because he has already swallowed the half of his!"

To put an end to the quarrel, the father adopts the wise measure of placing them on the ground.

They now cry out louder, and want again to see Punch, who is fighting with a cat. But the papa, who is now fatigued, is not inclined to hold them up again; he takes them away, and, to appease them, buys them gingerbread-cakes, and apples. Dodolphe, who is the eldest, does not always remain beside his father; at every instant he takes his hand away, and goes to look at whatever attracts his attention. Little Polyte wishes to do as his brother does, and runs off, perhaps, in a different direction. Then the unhappy father is greatly embarrassed, and running after his sons, who have not taken the same road, he stumbles, and knocks up against a passer-by, from whom he receives abuse; but he pays no attention to that; he is happy if, after a chase that brings the perspiration to his face, he succeeds in catching his fugitives! He discovers that his eldest son has the skin peeled off his nose, and his eye almost black; and that Polyte, the youngest, has his trowsers torn, and knee hurt.

"What is this?" cries the father. "I did not lose sight of you an instant, and now I find you in this condition!"

"Papa, a person playing struck me in the eye; he said I prevented him from winning."

"Papa, I was going to play with an old woman's dog, when it sprang upon me, and, in running away, I fell on my knees."

"Well, this is pretty work! What will your mother say when she sees you? I never knew such mischievous children; for I can never return home with you in a decent condition!"

"Papa, carry me!"

"Papa, carry me!"

"No, no; you must walk. I held you up to see Punch long enough; besides, it isn't worth while to ask to come out for a walk, if you always wish to be carried."

"Papa, are we still a long way from home?"

"No, not far."

"My feet are sore!"

"I am thirsty!"

"No, you are not thirsty: you have had enough; come along."

"Oh, papa, look at that cheesecake!"

"Hold your tongue, little gourmand; come, Polyte."

Polyte makes a wry face, holds his stomach, and mutters, "Oh, my belly, my belly!"

The children then refuse to walk.

Our married man experiences a moment of despair. He seizes his two sons by the hand in a state of nervous excitement, and drags them on, crying,

"Young rascals that you are! Do you call this a promenade?"

"Papa," muttered Dodolphe, "you have not sung to us to-day. Sing 'Malbrouk!'"

"Leave me alone, little scoundrels!"

"Oh, papa, you have not sung 'Miron-ton.' Bad papa, I will cry if you do not sing."

"Ah! what worthless things! you'll drive me mad; but I suppose I must please you—

"'Il reviendra-z-à Pâques, meronton, tonton, merontaine, Il reviendra-z-à Pâques, ou à la Trinité.'"

At length the indulgent father reaches home, when he is scolded by his wife for allowing his children to get their noses scratched, and their trowsers torn.

It is very natural to love one's own children; but when a husband takes upon himself the avocation of a nurse, he makes himself ridiculous in the eyes of his wife, which, remember, is a very dangerous thing. A wife, generally speaking, loves her husband, in proportion to her conviction of his superiority over her.

CHAPTER V.

THE PROMENADE.

It is three o'clock, and the husband promised to be ready at one; but Monsieur has not yet determined whether he will shave or not, or whether he will put on a dress or a frock coat, a light or a dark waistcoat.

At last, he is ready; he goes down stairs, smoothing his moustachios, or rubbing up his whiskers—looking at himself in apparent satisfaction.

Not finding Madame at the bottom of the stairs, he gets impatient, raises his head, and cries out,

"Well; have you put it off for another day?"

"Here I am, my dear; I have just been for my gloves."

"Ah, your gloves! next time it will be your handkerchief—I would have been greatly astonished, if, on going out, you had not forgotten something."

Madame, however, in putting on her gloves, takes her husband's arm.

"Strange mode indeed! to put your gloves on in the street."

"Why, but hurry me so."

"How! I
ago, and gr
indeed!"

wished to go out two hours
ed. I hurry you,

"Where shall we go?"

"I don't care."

"Nor I either."

"I will go where you please."

"We must decide, and not remain staring about in the middle of the street like two imbeciles. I know nothing more insupportable than a woman, whose only reply is 'I don't care.'"

"Well, my love, let us go to the Tuilleries."

They set out. Our gentleman looks at the ladies passing, or thinks of his affairs. Not a word is interchanged.

Sometimes in passing before a haberdasher's, Madame exclaims,

"Ah, what a pretty shawl!"—or "There's a pretty pattern for a gown!"—or "Oh what a lovely bonnet!"

Monsieur does not hear, or he pretends not to hear her; or should he deign to reply, it is with,

"Hum! um! um;" or "yes, yes." But he takes care never to stop.

They arrive at the Tuilleries. They come and go; not a word is exchanged; but Monsieur yawns or respire as if he were choking.

They come to a place where there is no one. The husband mutters,

"This walk is certainly very agreeable."

"We must go somewhere, my dear."

"But there was no use in coming to the Tuilleries."

"You would not fix upon a place."

"Always the same; you choose this place because you know that there is not a promenade more tiresome than this one."

"Oh, you never take a walk with me but you get tired. It matters not where."

"Ah; reproaches—yes, always the way. But how people can find amusement in walking in the midst of this crowd astonishes me; children's hoops running between one's legs, and swallowing dust at every inspiration. Certainly it is very pleasant."

"If you were to speak to me it would be nothing."

"My love, when people are always together, it is impossible for them to find something to say every moment."

"If you were with another lady it would be different."

"She at least would be complaisant, and would not be continually snarling at me."

"You call it snarling, because I spoke to you about your dissatisfied looks."

"Come now, I have done."

"Ah! and do you think you will prevent me from speaking at present?"

"Yes; cry a little louder, that we may excite the curiosity of the passers-by."

"And if I do so, do you think people will heed us—you think everybody looks at you."

"If you continue, I will leave you."

"Oh leave; leave; it's all one to me."

Monsieur makes a full stand; he reflects, but does not let go Madame's arm; and the walk is terminated without the exchange of another word.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OVER-ATTENTIVE HUSBAND.

He is known at first sight. When taking a walk, he gives one of his hands to the child, if there be one; he regulates his step according to that of his wife, he dandifies himself, imitates her every motion, and each minute he looks lovingly in her face, and in anxiety says,

"When you are fatigued, my dear, we will go back. Would you like to take a coach, my love? I am afraid that the sun will hurt your eyes. Take care, dear, of that stone. Shall we walk a little slower?" And a thousand phrases of a similar kind. An impatient shake of the head is generally the only reply.

When he takes his wife to the theatre, he makes her sit down to try half a dozen places before he fixes on one.

"My love, you are not comfortable here—those large bonnets in front will prevent you from seeing—let us go a little lower down; you will see better."

"You must not stop here, love—there's a current of air passing behind you—you will catch a cold; it is very dangerous; let us go elsewhere."

"Ah, there is somebody near us who smells dreadfully of musk. I am afraid of your nerves—you must not remain here."

The poor woman, fatigued by these peregrinations, draws her gown in front, and squats down, saying,

"This will do—I am well enough here—you fatigue me by making me run about the whole of the theatre."

"It is that you may be comfortable, my dear."

The piece begins, and Madame is very desirous to listen to the actors, but in the middle of a very interesting scene, her husband exclaims—

"How pale you are! you are not ill! do you suffer in any way?"

"No, no; suffer? Why should I?"

"For if you did, it is better for you to say so. Perhaps out of kindness to me you desire to stop; but you are wrong."

"All that I desire of you is, to allow me to hear the piece."

"I don't prevent you from listening, I'm sure. It is the same to me; but it gives me pain to see you so pale."

When he dines out with his wife, he never loses sight of her, and should he be seated at the other side of the table, he never fails to call out,

"My love, do not eat that; it will not agree with you. Cucumbers always make you ill."

"Do not touch that lobster; it is too heavy for your stomach. If you take salmon you are wrong."

"Ah, sir; I pray you not to pour out that Madeira to my wife; I know her stomach perfectly, and I am sure it will do her harm."

Madame, irritated with her husband for his attention, pouts, and eats nothing at all; for being thwarted in her choice, she loses her appetite; still, he, on the contrary, eats of everything and drinks of the various wines on the table.

If going to a ball, a farce is sure to ensue. First he inspects his wife's toilette.

"That dress is too low bodied, you will catch a cold; or that one is too tight round the waist; it must hurt you."

"But I assure you it does not hurt me."

"Women will never be convinced of anything. Lacing too tight often brings on serious complaints. Indeed, every day we hear 'Madame so and so is dead. Strange; she was so well made, and so fresh. *Who could have thought that she was consumptive?' But the real truth is, that, to make her waist small, she laced so tight, that she brought on a disease of the lungs."

"But I assure you that I am not too tight laced; there's room for my finger, my dear."

"Oh yes, the finger; you can easily effect that by drawing in your breath. You will oblige me, my love, by putting on another gown. I shall be uneasy all the evening if you go in that dress."

To terminate the discussion, Madame consents to put on a dress that does not please her so well, and that contrariety prevents her from enjoying herself as she had anticipated, for all the evening she thinks of the dress she was obliged to put off, and which fitted her so well.

When at the ball, instead of allowing his wife to amuse herself as she pleases, our husband never loses sight of her. Do not think that he does so from jealousy. No, the over-attentive husband is not jealous, for he is persuaded that his wife adores him, and that she knows that no one could be so attentive as he is.

No sooner does his wife dance a quadrille, than he runs to her—

"You are very warm, my dear."

"No; not too warm."

"Yes, you are very warm; are you going to dance the next quadrille?"

"Certainly; I am engaged."

"I am sorry for it; you ought to have rested a little."

No sooner has the next quadrille terminated, and the cavalier has shown Madame to her seat, than the face of the husband appears like one of those shades, that, by the velocity of a phantasmagoria, starts up before us.

"How flushed you are, my dear!" says the anxious husband, with the solicitude of a mother when feeling the pulse of her son, who is feverish.

"What is there astonishing in being flushed, when one has just danced?"

"But I never saw you so red before."

Madame turns round to a young lady who is seated next her, and whispers,

"Is there anything strange in the colour of my face? Is it of the hue of the crab?"

"No, Madame, you are very well; your husband does not know what he says."

A young man presents himself, and offers Madame an ice, which she accepts; but when raising a spoonful to her mouth, the husband espies her, and cries out,

"Oh, my dear, you must not eat that." •

"Why not? it is an ice. Other ladies that dance eat them."

"These ladies may do what they please; it matters not to me; but I know your temperament. An ice! Oh, no. That would be imprudent, indeed. Will you have a glass of punch?"

"You know, sir, that I cannot drink punch, while I like ices."

"You must not eat them, however."

The husband takes the ice destined for his wife, eats it before her, and even tells her that it is excellent, and that he is sorry it would hurt her, or she should have it.

The supper hour approaches; she is informed by the mistress of the house that the ladies will be at table by themselves; she is overjoyed at that, as she could eat whatever she pleased, without being in terror lest her husband should see her. But a quarter of an hour before supper the husband appears, and presenting a pelisse, says,

"A carriage is waiting for us below, my dear."

"How! leave so soon?"

"So soon! Why, it is too late by far."

"We are going to have supper in a few minutes."

"It is for that reason that we are going, because you

might take something in my absence that might hurt you. You are so delicate, and you know that neither of us ever take supper."

The anxious husband drags his wife, who is on the point of crying, out of the room, and who resolves on entering her apartment, never to go again to a theatre, a ball, or a dinner party.

Do you think that a wife is happy who has an over-attentive husband?

Happily, however, that species is somewhat rare.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HUSBAND WHO IS ALL-ATTENTIVE TO HIS WIFE BEFORE PEOPLE.

The married man who carries his attentions to that extravagant point which we have just illustrated, is a being perfectly insupportable, and liable to give the most unsusceptible wife nervous attacks, and to make her fall into swoons.

And do you think that such attentions are the results of the extreme love that the husband experiences for his wife? Undeceive yourself. What he desires is, to be cited as a model for husbands; to be thought a man who adores his wife, who thinks of her alone. If he loved her, he would not be, like the apothecaries after M. de Pourceaugnac, continually at her elbow.

I range such husbands among the class of hypocrites.

We have again those who devour their wives with caresses when in company, who cannot be near their wives without pressing their waist, or kissing them on the cheek, the neck, the forehead, and even the lips; but who fail in common politeness when alone. Sometimes the change that is effected is as sudden as a view at a spectacle.

"Why is the breakfast not ready?"

That is his first question.

"My dear, it is not late."

"Not late! If I wish to breakfast earlier; if I am hungry—it is all laziness. Why is there coffee? I prefer chocolate."

"You ought to have told me, my love."

"You ought to have asked me, ma'am. I heard the bell ring a short time ago; who was it?"

"That fair young man who came twice to ask your advice relative to his marriage. You mentioned that he was troublesome, so I told him that you were not at home."

The married man bounds from his chair, and in rage shouts out,
 "Who told you to send away the young man? You are always making foolish mistakes. I wished to see him to-day, and you have told him that I was from home. I think the people in this house would rather hang themselves than do anything that might please me."

In his rage our gentleman forgets that he has a cup of coffee resting on his knee. The cup falls, and the coffee is spilt upon his morning gown.

"Look there, my gown is spoiled. It is your fault, Madame."

"How my fault? You should not upset your cup."

"Your foolishness has caused it. Take care; do not drive me to extremities."

"In your airs again. It is well seen that there's nobody present."

"Won't you hold your tongue?"

"In society you devour me with caresses, and people think that I am happy. If they knew how you treat me when we are alone——"

"Won't you desist?" cries the infuriated husband, gnashing his teeth.

"Yes; the caresses that you give me before people excite pleasure."

"If you do not cease, I will throw my cup at your head."

"You are capable of doing so, monster."

"Ah! you call me monster, do you? There!"

The cup flies at Madame, who escapes by inclining her head, but she does not avert the blow that follows.

Whilst Madame is weeping, the bell is rung, and the servant announces some one.

The husband turns round to his wife, and says in a menacing air,

"I trust you will not cry before people. Wipe your eyes, or I will begin again when they have left."

The visitor arrives, and Monsieur immediately assumes a smiling aspect.

The visitor, addressing Madame, says,

"How pale you are, and how red your eyes! Have you been ill?"

The husband does not allow his wife to reply, but immediately answers,

"Oh, it is nothing at all. She sat up reading in bed last night, which affected her eyes. I often say to her, 'My love, you will hurt your sight by reading in bed;' but she will not listen to me."

And saying this, our husband approaches his wife, and caresses her.

Of all vices, the most disgusting is that of hypocrisy; for the hypocrite assumes virtues which he does not possess.

The thief who attacks you on the highway tells you frankly that he is a thief. The husband who caresses his wife before people, but who beats her in their absence, is more culpable than he.

The wife who possesses such a husband, and who remains faithful to her duties, ought to have statues, and altars, and obelisks erected to her memory.

CHAPTER VIIL

THE MARRIED MAN AT THE THEATRE WITH HIS WIFE.

Madame desires to go to the Opera Comique; but the husband says, just as they are leaving the house, "My dear, what's going to be played at the Opera this evening is not very amusing. Let us go to the Français; I am sure it is preferable."

"What's going to be played at the Français?"

"*Le Mariage de Figaro*."

"What! we have seen it over and over again!"

"Oh, it matters not—it is always amusing; and then it is so well played! Yes, decidedly, we shall go to the Français."

The wife does not insist. It is still a great effort on the husband's part to take her to the theatre; and she testifies her gratitude by going to the one which he prefers.

They arrive there, and take their places; Madame is seated in the front tier, with her husband by her side; but the latter, instead of looking upon the stage, takes his spy-glass and ogles all the ladies that are in the house. The piece begins; and our gentleman still continues to glance at all around him, saying, from time to time, what pretty eyes! Has she not beautiful teeth? Oh, what lovely hair! How inconvenient the boxes are; a person does not know where to put his legs; it seems as if they were made for dwarfs. I am going behind!" He is no sooner seated than he begins again to ogle those about him, and to speak of what he sees to his wife, who prefers listening to the piece. During the following act he espies one of his friends in the pit, and goes to speak to him. He comes back as the act finishes, and soon afterwards goes out to walk in the lobby. On his return, his wife asks him, rather angrily, where he has been? "In the lobby, talking to a friend," he replies.

"And you left me alone for such a time!"

"Ah, my dear, you cannot expect me to remain nailed to one spot the whole evening; if I did so, my legs would ache so

much, that I should not be able to walk afterwards; besides, when I spoke to you, you would not answer me."

"I was listening to the piece."

"The piece! why, we know it by heart; we have seen it more than ten times."

L'ouvreuse appears at the box-door—

"Give me an evening journal," he says; "the *Moniteur*, the *Messenger*, no matter which, so that I have something to read."

The woman gives him a newspaper, and he begins to read, neither paying attention to the piece, nor speaking to his wife, during the whole of the time.

"The last act begins; the husband wishes to go out to purchase some oranges, but his wife tells him in a positive manner that she does not wish any. Finding himself compelled to remain, he becomes every moment more restless. At length he sees a good-looking female at a distance; he raises his glass, and, to have a better view of her, turns his back to his wife. Madame cannot help saying, "Indeed, you have a singular way of conducting yourself at the theatre. If any of our friends see you turn your back to me, they will conclude that we are not likely to be a very happy pair!"

The husband turns round, and fixing his eyes on the play, murmurs, "Ah! you are angry; I am sorry for it."

When the piece is finished, Madame turns towards her husband to ascertain if he is satisfied, and finds that he is in a profound sleep; she pushes him, and when he opens his eyes he tries to appear sprightly, and calls out, "Bravo, bravo! they have played exceedingly well! I am very well pleased!"

They go home; and the wife says to herself, "I am sure he might as well have taken me to the Opera."

CHAPTER IX.

THE LIBERTINE HUSBAND.

I do not know exactly why I make a distinct category of the married libertine, for, with very few exceptions, all husbands are so, more or less.

When he marries, he always says—

"It's all over now. I must be wise; I have had enough of folly; I know the world. After all, it's all the same; therefore I am resolved to be faithful to my wife."

A few months afterwards, when he happens to come in contact with a pretty woman, he comes the amiable, and employs the most seductive language; he shoots forth glances of fire,

sighs, and even risks a declaration, absolutely as if he were not married.

Those who are prudent abstain from writing *billets doux*; or, if they are obliged to employ the epistolary style, they disguise their writing, do not give their signature, or if they do, it is an imaginary one, or one of their invention. *Verba volant, scripta manent*. Almost all these gentlemen take a pretty little name, unknown to their wives; and, in the circles which they attend as bachelors, M. Dupont calls himself Arthur; M. Benoit, Charles; M. Durand, Isidore; and so on.

The servant is somewhat enlightened in these matters. The master never forgets to say,

"If a letter come here addressed to M. Isidore, you will bring it to me—when I am alone, remember; never when my wife is present."

The married men also contrive to aid each other in their little intrigues.

Monsieur has a rendezvous where he is to meet a young sensitive creature, for whom he has ordered an extra dinner, or *intra muros*, in a private way.

He goes to one of his friends, who is married, like himself, and whose heart is as easily inflamed as his own. He takes him aside, and says,

"To-morrow I dine with you."

"How! to-morrow? Faith, I knew nothing of it."

"Listen. To-morrow it is understood that I dine with you at an inn—a wager—guests fixed—do you understand? I said so to my wife, because I do not wish to dine at home. You see—"

"Ah! very well—that happens fortunately; for I also dine out."

"If you have time, come with me to my house, and we shall speak of our dinner before my wife, which will shade the whole with an air of truth."

"Willingly."

When Madame makes her appearance, the accommodating gentleman says—

"Madame, I beg pardon for purporting to take away your husband to-morrow. It is a dinner among gentlemen, and which has been fixed for some time. You may be easy about Monsieur, for we will conduct ourselves with discretion."

Madame, in gratitude, replies,

"I am always easy when I know that my husband is with you."

The married libertine ordinarily speaks little to his wife; he seldom thwarts her; he promises her everything that she desires. Should she wish to go to a concert, or to the Bois de Boulogne, to see a piece in vogue, or to spend a day in the country, he always replies,

"Yes, we shall go; I promise you that I shall take you there."

The promises are renewed without ceasing, but are never realised. Sometimes Madame, in impatience, says—

"It is an age since you promised to take me to the country. The weather is magnificent; why can we not go to-day?"

"I cannot, my dear. I have business to transact with two lawyers."

"To-morrow, then?"

"Yes, yes; but no—I remember; it is impossible. There is a meeting of creditors, which I must attend."

"Then the day after to-morrow. It is understood, I will dress myself early, and we shall set out by twelve o'clock. At twelve o'clock?"

"Yes, my dear."

The day arrives, and Madame is dressed a few minutes before her time; but on asking the servant for her husband, she receives the reply,

"Master went out before eleven, but he said that it would not be long before he returned."

An hour elapses, Madame goes to the window every instant, in the hope of seeing her husband. Another hour, and another. Madame no longer hopes, but in sadness, takes off her bonnet and shawl.

At length, about four o'clock, Monsieur arrives out of breath, and his face streaming with perspiration.

"Now, you are not ready," says he to his wife.

"Ready! I was so at twelve o'clock, and remained expecting you till one; but finding that you did not come, I undressed."

"If I had known that, I would not have hurried so much."

"Ah, you hurried yourself!—you arrive at four o'clock, when we ought to have left here by twelve."

"It is not my fault, I met a party who detained me."

"You are always meeting people. It would have been better if you had told me that you would not take me. It would have been more generous."

"Ah, you want a quarrel. Well, I'm off."

Monsieur takes his hat, and disappears.

CHAPTER X.

THE CARELESS AND THE JEALOUS HUSBAND.

Take care, gentlemen, carelessness has a resemblance to indifference, and the ladies, sometimes have their revenge on an indifferent husband.

The careless husband goes out, comes in, and absents himself, heedless of what is going on at home.

If the servants say, "Mistress has gone out," he says, "Ah," with an air which means, "Very good."

Do not think that he endeavours to ascertain when she went out, or at what hour she returned. He never thinks of asking a single question.

Sometimes on coming home when unexpected, he finds a young man whom he has never seen before. He politely salutes him, and his wife says,

"Do you not remember this gentleman?"

"No, no; I was trying but I cannot."

"We met him at Madame B's; he had the kindness to accompany me on the piano; then we sang a duet."

"Ah, very good; I think I remember. He has a very fine voice."

"Monsieur asked permission to come occasionally to play over a piece of music with me, and when you entered, we were going to begin."

"Very well, go on, do not let me disturb you. He is very amiable in coming to see us. I am glad he comes, as he will exercise your voice, for the voice requires exercise."

Our careless husband, listens for a few minutes to the music, but shortly he goes to look after his business matters, leaving the two by themselves.

The young man who has probably acquired a taste for duets, goes every day, and sometimes in the evenings.

Do not think that the husband finds that assiduity extraordinary, and that he is uneasy about it. Far from that, he has become so habituated in seeing him with his wife, that when he absents himself, he asks,

"Where is Arthur, or Edward, or Alfred. How is it that he has not come? Have you sent for him?"

Now for the portrait of the jealous husband.

When a man is married he ought to consider thus:—

"Does my wife deceive me, or does she not? If she deceives me, I ought not to suffer, nor make myself wretched, by the fear of losing her heart. If she does not deceive me, I do very wrong in suspecting her."

Indeed I think this is reasoning *ad hominem*. But it will go for nothing, as it will not prevent people from being jealous. A married man who is jealous, is wretched himself, and renders every one wretched about him.

The most simple occurrence gives rise to a thousand suspicions. Then he torments his wife, beats the children, and scolds his servant.

If Madame rises rather early, and, thinking her husband is still asleep, makes the least possible noise, Monsieur, who has only had one eye shut, says,

"The devil! you take every precaution not to disturb me in rising; it appears that you are afraid of disturbing me."

"My love, thinking that you were asleep, I tried to avoid making a noise."

"Ah, without doubt, you did not wish to wake me. A husband who sleeps soundly is more convenient, I grant. Why do you rise so early this morning? What is there pressing?"

"Nothing; only I could not sleep; besides it is time to get up."

If our gentleman has an appointment, and should his wife say,

"My love; do you remember your appointment. You will be late."

He replies,

"You appear to be anxious to get me out of the house."

If Madame goes out, and remains a quarter of an hour longer than her husband expected, he concludes that she is carrying on some intrigue.

If she refuses to go out in the evening with her husband, he immediately concludes that she is going to receive some one in his absence.

Innumerable instances of this kind could be cited.

Jealousy is a sad thing, and often leads to a tragic end—an Othello.

Happy are the husbands who are not jealous.

CHAPTER XL

THE HUSBAND WHO KNOWS WHAT YOU KNOW.

He changes not his countenance, his gait, his manners, nor his method of expressing himself.

"At uno disce omnes."

